A YANKEE TRADER *in the* GOLD RUSH

Franklin A. Buck

$3.50

A YANKEE TRADER IN THE GOLD RUSH

The Letters of Franklin A. Buck

1846–1880

In 1849, young Frank Buck of Bucksport, Maine, and six companions dropped anchor in San Francisco Bay and plunged with characteristic fervor into the life of a topsy-turvy city where gold could be washed out of the sand of a dock-side street and tin pans were $5.00 apiece. It was a country of gamblers: they gambled with life, with money, with anything that might possibly amass a big fortune in a little time. Buck tried his hand at everything. He sold flour, operated a saw-mill, and raised hogs. New mines meant jammed saloons on Saturday nights, Fourth of July celebrations that were uncomfortably real, 'balls' where there were 60 men and 12 girls, gambling and lynching and Baptist ministers praying on the Town Hall steps. In 1869 Buck followed the cry of 'Silver in Nevada!' More excitement, sudden fortune, success!

Of all his experiences in the midst of this excitement and recklessness, Buck wrote like the genuine Maine native he was: tersely, with forthright simplicity, and with bits of humor here and there so characteristic that one can almost hear the drawl of his voice.

The Riverside Press Cambridge

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A YANKEE TRADER IN THE GOLD RUSH

THE LETTERS OF
FRANKLIN A. BUCK

THE SAN FRANCISCO FIRE OF 1851

A YANKEE TRADER IN THE GOLD RUSH

THE LETTERS OF
FRANKLIN A. BUCK

COMPILED BY
KATHERINE A. WHITE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1930

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INTRODUCTION

By MARY SEWALL BUCK CARR
Daughter of FRANKLIN A. BUCK

This New England youth, Franklin A. Buck, has painted for us a glowing picture of a day long since passed — a day replete with adventure and romance. As we peruse these fascinating letters, we sense the courage and indomitable spirit inherited from his Colonial forbears. Sterling men and women were those ancestors who were responsible for the founding of the Colonies. Small wonder that their descendants should be imbued with that Wanderlust that ever beckoned toward the Golden West.

This lusty youth, graduate of Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, was a direct descendant of two famous families: Colonel Jonathan Buck, a man of ardent temperament and iron will, founded the town of Bucksport, Maine, the birthplace of the author. The Buck family trace back to one Sir Hugh Buck, who was Master of the Rolls under King James and Queen Elizabeth.

Colonel Dummer Sewall, his great-grandfather, founded Bath, Maine. Both were Revolutionary heroes, and Colonel Sewall, a brilliant scholar, and leader of his community, was elected a delegate to the First Continental Congress. He left a magnificent collection of three hundred letters which are greatly prized by the Sewall family — the shipbuilders of Bath, Maine.

This flair for letter-writing, the keeping of diaries, etc., seems to be a direct throw-back to the famous Judge Sewall whose letters and diaries are so well known and widely read.

With such a splendid background, no wonder my father inherited a strong, rugged character and brilliant mentality. He was always foremost in his community to uphold the glory and honor of his country — intensely patriotic, imbued with the highest ideals, and a great lover of music, literature, and art. Grand Opera was his special predilection.

The noble sister, Mary Sewall Bradley, was a woman of admirable character and attainments. Seldom does a brother express so much affection for a sister as is found in these letters.

If the publication of this very intimate correspondence, touching so vitally the early history of California, shall serve to keep alive the interest in those glamorous days, and awaken a more thorough appreciation of the brave pioneer men and women who have given to us this Golden Empire of the West, I shall feel that I have added my bit to the effort that is being made to bring the early California history to the public of to-day.

MARY SEWALL BUCK CARR

A YANKEE TRADER IN THE GOLD RUSH

THE LETTERS OF
FRANKLIN A. BUCK

A YANKEE TRADER IN THE GOLD RUSH

NEW YORK, *November* 24, 1846

DEAR SISTER:

It is hard work for me to write my thoughts. If I was with you I could talk more in five minutes than I can write on two sheets of paper. But I must begin to practise at this kind of work more than I have done.

. . . . . .

In regard to myself, I am very glad I left B. Here is the place to find business of all kinds and as my friends here interest themselves for me I think there is a prospect of my doing something. There is quite a change between living in the two places but I like a city the best. I shall make New York my home for the present. Tim Smith has introduced me to all his friends. I like his Cousin Bill very much. I walk up to see him at his uncle's on Sundays and go to church with him in the afternoon. I have made some acquaintances in Brooklyn and like the people very much but I had rather board in New York and shall go in the Spring. I visit at Alfred's and Sarah's and Bigelow's very often. John and I go down to Sarah's about twice a week and have a good game of whist. That's forbidden fruit in Bucksport but here it is quite different. Public Opinion is not quite so strong against dancing, whist and the theatre here.

The ceremony of installing the pastor over the Pilgrim's Church came off last Thursday. The singing was very good. They have got a fine organ in this church. Next to Trinity it is the largest in the country. The best singing I have heard was at George Reatt's choir. He

beats Mason. The first treble singer is the best voice I ever heard. I wish our choir in B. could hear them once.

They have as much quarrelling in the choir here as at home. Bigelow and his wife have left because Uncle Richard said he had as leave hear it thunder as hear her sing. Others will not sing without pay. As they do not hire any singers they are jealous of each other, get mad and sit below. In fact singers are the same all over the world.

I have to work hard now but as soon as the canal closes it will be easy. I suppose you are froze up at home by this time. It begins to be cooler here but there is not much snow here in the winter. No sleigh riding for me this winter. All the riding I have is in the omnibus when I go up Broadway. It is cheap. You can go three miles for six cents.

The next journey you take come out here. Don't stop at Boston. That's small compared to this. If you want to see the fashions come out here and walk up Broadway at four in the afternoon and I will show you the two belles and all the lions of the day. Next year I shall expect to see you here.

NEW YORK, *January* 10, 1847

I have sat down to converse with you once more through the medium of the mail and like all persons when they don't know how to begin, commence with the weather. We have had just about such weather as you have in April or the first of January. The thermometer stood only six degrees lower in Brooklyn than it did the fourth of July last, but it has changed for the worse since and now snows. We have not had any sleighing yet. Don't want to see any snow here. It only makes it muddy. We have Christmas and New Year's here as holidays. No business done at all.

On Christmas the Catholics and Episcopalians have a

great time trimming the churches with evergreens and have a service all day. I attended three churches. Trinity Church looked splendid and they had fine music.

New Year's Day all the male part of the city call on the female. Wherever you go you will find all the girls dressed out in their best, sitting up very prim, to receive the young men. In the other parlor you will find a splendid table set out, well furnished with all the good things of this life, wine not excepted. About ten o'clock the streets begin to be filled with men going the rounds. The 'upper crust' go in carriages, of course, but there are plenty left to go afoot. They continue to call till ten at night or till they get so corned (which is generally the case) that they are obliged to retire.

On New Year's night it reminded me of the time when musters were in fashion down East. About the time they were coming home, running into the stone walls, singing and shouting and fighting, the streets here presented just such a picture. There is no such thing as Temperance known here. All classes of the community imbibe and liquor is sold openly at every eating house and oyster saloon in the city. It is well I don't love it.

I have joined a musical society which Smith has the direction of. He has got his piano here and we meet once a week at his uncle's. There are eighteen ladies and gentlemen belonging to it. They are all very pleasant acquaintances. We gave a private concert the other night. The house had two large parlors and we occupied one. The audience, consisting of about one hundred, the other. It passed off very well. Some of the members are very good singers and were called out on several of the pieces twice.

After the singing was over we sat down to a first rate supper. After supper we had dancing and games of all kinds. The dancing I could not join in, which was owing

to my *bringing up*. Everyone knows how to dance here and it is always an introduction in company. I feel mortified enough to think I never learned. We left at half past one, which was considered early as the most of the company staid till three. You can't get up such a society in Bucksport because they all want to be leaders and none of the girls there have confidence to stand and sing in the front seat in the gallery in church, much more to sing a duette alone in front of an audience.

I made quite a large acquaintance in the city at this party and called on all of them on New Year's with Smith and Bill Benson and then went with them and was introduced to their friends. We made in the whole, sixty-three calls. Aunt Charlotte received about eighty and Benson's wife about one hundred.

Sunday at noon I should like to step down to your house as I use to but although I am separated from you by many miles in person, my mind is with you very often and you are more dear to me than when I could see you every day. Hope to see you out here another summer.

NEW YORK, *February* 23, 1847

Mr. Johnson has taken a pardner, a Mr. Hollister, who appears to be a very smart man. This will increase his business much. I have made an arrangement to go with him and shall begin about the middle of March or as soon as the canal opens. He will give just enough to live on. I expect to board with him.

Aunt Charlotte had a little company last week, about twenty young persons. We all enjoyed it very much, especially Emaline who danced herself almost to death. Yes — dancing in a deacon's house! What would you say to that in Bucksport? You are altogether mistaken if you think dancing is going out of fashion. It is all the rage here. Every time I am in company it makes me mad

to think I never learned. After tea, one of the ladies played for Emma and Eliza Ripley to dance the polka. After that they all took part and kept it up till ten o'clock. The young lady who was my pardner gave me a private lesson beforehand so that I walked through it pretty well. I shall learn one of these days.

Tim Smith is here yet, doing nothing as usual. I should not be surprised if he went to Bucksport in the Spring.

Last night John took me to the Italian Opera. He had heard it twice and was perfectly delighted. I always supposed that the Italian singing was all affectation and because it was fashionable it was liked but I must confess in spite of myself that I never heard such music in my life. I was most agreeably disappointed, I tell you. You have probably seen an account of the company in the papers. There are between thirty and forty performers in the orchestra and five principal singers. The fellow who sings bass had the greatest voice that ever I heard. The lady is very pretty and has also a fine voice. The opera was Lucia di Lammermoor. You have read the story, the Bride of L. It is all acted. Only instead of being spoken it is sung in Italian. This language is much better to sing than ours. There are some parts of it coming after she has killed her husband and becomes crazy and when she signs the marriage contract and Ravenswood burst in and curses her that are beyond all description. I will send you the opera which has the story as they sing it, if you would like it.

NEW YORK, *May* 10, 1847

Last Friday was a great day here, celebrating the victories in Mexico. Grand display of flags on the shipping and public buildings. I have sent Sewall the Herald which contains a full account of the proceedings.

The military looked finely and I had the pleasure of seeing the salute paid to the Mayor and General Gaines. I should think the old man is seventy by his looks.

In the evening the scene in Broadway and the Park was truly magnificent. It fairly turned night into day. A great many of the private dwellings on Broadway had their parlor shutters thrown open, giving one a view inside splendidly lighted up. The fire works on the Astor House and the City Hall were very fine. Two bands were stationed, one on the balcony of the City Hall and one on Tammany Hall. They discoursed such music during the evening as would have done you good to hear. If you could have been here and walked through the Park and up Broadway with me it would have given you some idea of the people there are in this immense bee hive of human beings. From the Bowling Green to Canal Street, a distance of two miles, it was one solid jam of people. All was fun and frolic, no fights or rows that I saw but I saw a great many people with some strange disorder in their heads that would cause them to shout and sing and now and then the sidewalk would fly up and hit them in the head, a disorder very prevalent in this city.

It is about time for me to hear from you. I should think your last was written fast day.... I prefer N.Y. Write me soon the state of things at home.

NEW YORK, *June* 28, 1847

Father leaves this afternoon at five and will tell you all the news when he gets home. I am very sorry Joseph did not come with him. It seems as though he was afraid to venture any farther than Boston.

The evenings for a week past have been most delightful, excepting the heat which is most intense. You can't endure any clothing. Cravats and vests are all out of

date and the Southern dress all the fashion (viz: a shirt collar and spurs).

I went down to Arthur's farm last week with Tim Smith and got our full of cherries. He raises cartloads. Strawberries are about done. We have had them every night for a fortnight. I am glad to hear you are getting along so well down East. Father looks fat and is in good spirits. Tell Mother I am greatly obliged to her for those shirts. That was more than I expected. I supposed that they had done clothing me. However, they will be very acceptable.

I send you a book which is a pretty good story. I thought of buying some present but I am too poor to get anything worth while so you must wait until I get more salary. I think just as much of you and send it with the same feelings that I should a thousand dollars.

Tim and I went to the Park the other night to hear the beautiful opera of Norma. This is a better company than the one I heard last winter. Tedesco is the greatest singer I ever heard. This is all the place of amusement I have attended in a long time and will be the last for some time. I had been expecting a great treat ever since I heard of them in Boston and was not disappointed. To anyone that likes music this is the kind I think you would be perfectly charmed with if you could hear it.

Give my respects to Ed Kirk and tell him I should like to hear from him, yourself ditto. Sarah is already now to have you come out here and make a visit. Arthur thinks of going down East this summer. John cut his whiskers off yesterday, and I remain yours perspiringly.

NEW YORK, *August 27*

I began to think it had been a long time since I had heard from you. Hope this will find you enjoying the same health as myself, which is first-rate, except oc-

casionally on Mondays. I eat a very light dinner at an eating house during the week but on Sundays Sarah gets up a first-rate dinner. John generally comes round and we go into it strong, finishing off with melons, peaches and all kinds of fruit. It's no wonder that I have a slight pain in the stomach the next day.

I have hardly been out of the city this summer. On the fifth of July I took a trip to West Point. Had a fine time. Last week went on a picnic just out of Brooklyn in a grove, with the Thompsons. You remember Henrietta visited Fanny D. last summer. There are five young ladies in the family and there were about forty in the party. We rode out and after skylarking (these city girls run perfectly wild when they get a chance) round until dark, walked in by moonlight. Speaking of moonlight, we are having the most lovely nights that ever I saw and we have promenades and persons to enjoy them, which is one half, you know.

The other expedition which I made was to Coney Island, laying about ten miles from the city down to Sandy Hook. Here is a most splendid beach to go in bathing; a large pavilion with all the 'fixins' for eating and drinking, bowling alleys and pistol gallerys. It is the watering place for the poor million of New York. We poor devils who can't afford to go to Saratoga or Newport and such places. Thank Heaven we can go down here for a shilling and enjoy all the comfort in the way of a cool breeze and a swim in the surf, that are to be had anywhere. The weather has been delightful, as cool as down East.

NEW YORK, *November* 3, 1847

We are having sad times at the house. You know Mr. Johnson was complaining before you left but did not give up until a week ago last Thursday. Last Saturday he was

taken very sick, so much so that Dr. Spear was alarmed about him. I came over in the morning and got the best doctor in the city, Dr. Paine, to consult with him. Monday his disease took a new form and went into his brain. He was raving crazy all night. Yesterday they adopted a new mode of treatment: shaved his head and blistered it, and he now is in a very critical situation. They are to hold a consultation at noon and they think they will be able to decide about his case. It must soon come to a crisis one way or the other. I have talked with the doctors and they think the chances are against him, but men sometimes live after doctors give them up, you know, and I can't believe yet that he is going to die. I hope not.

I am glad you enjoyed your journey home. We had a fine day in the city the day you went up the river. You want to land at West Point in order to see anything of it and go up on the plain. I supposed Boston would look small after leaving New York — don't wonder you were disgusted with it. It won't compare with Brooklyn to live in. I wish with Joseph that you were settled down out here and hope he will make up his mind to come out here at some future time and go into business. I enjoyed your visit as much as you did and can now write to you with more interest about things that you have seen.

I suppose it is quite a change from walking Broadway and dining at your nabob cousin's at five o'clock and going to such churches as Trinity, to go back to housework and to your humble church in Bucksport. It is too bad, as you say, that you don't have a larger organ. It must sound small, I think — but as Joseph used to observe to me while we were looking at some of those splendid houses in the upper part of the city: 'Do you suppose they are any happier than we are?' I guess not, although I would not object to owning two or three of them. You

are probably just as well off as you would be if you were worth a million — and much happier.

I am glad you have the faculty of making travelling acquaintances. It is very pleasant, I think, but the Yankees have the name of being too stiff, and I think you will notice this in travelling north. The farther south you get, the less you see of it.

NEW YORK, *January* 3, 1848

Christmas I spent part of the day in the Catholic Church in Barclay Street, looking at the mummeries going on and the rest of it eating a good dinner. In the evening it snowed hard and we promised ourselves a sleigh ride but there was not enough. It has been warm as spring all the week. I have heard of London fogs but I think New York can beat it. For four days we have not seen across the run but had to go by ringing a bell. Sometimes it would come down so thick that you could not see across the street. New Year's Day was foggy and muddy but otherwise it did very well. By eleven o'clock the streets were filled with callers. I made a most elaborate toilet for me (for you know I seldom get dressed). I even cased my hands in kid gloves, mounted a white vest and started. Saw some very pretty girls. Said all the fine things I knew, drank one glass of wine, any quantity of coffee and lemonade. The young ladies looked charming, dressed in white and kids. The gentlemen looked muddy except the 'Upper Ten' who went in carriages. To give you an idea of the business done: one young lady where I called about eight in the evening said she had over two hundred calls and they had drank 8 gallons of coffee. Mrs. Price is famed for her coffee, to say nothing of her daughter. I called on Folsom's wife and Mary. She likes it here very much. Mrs. H. Pond inquired for you, also Capt. Powers and

about twenty more whom you know nothing about and then came home *sober*, which is more than any one I saw can say, for of all the revelling that ever I heard the scenes in Broadway about eleven, beat it. Every lamp post was ornamented with some poor fellow and serenades were very frequent. New Year's Day is observed more than any other day here. Everybody gives themselves up to pleasure. No business is done at all. I like the custom of calling very much. Why don't you introduce it at Bucksport. I really pity you about your singing but I can tell you the secret. You can't expect good singing unless you are willing to pay for it and that they have never done. The poorest churches here pay their organist at least $150.00 a year and he finds two good singers. The Pilgrims pay $800 and the church in B. are certainly able to pay something. Why don't they send out and hire some public female singer. Tell the church for $500 I will agree to find an organist and two female singers. Mary Taylor, the actress, gets only $250 for singing at St. Luke's. Perhaps you might get her and then you could have a theatre during the week besides. I should think you would want something for an excitement.

NEW YORK, *January* 21, 1848

I must not forget to tell you that tomorrow evening we are to have the company of the *Heiress*, Miss Cornelia Thompson, who is coming to roll bagatelle. Perhaps you heard of her when you were here. She is to have $300,000, only when she is of age. Besides, she is said to be very pretty. I shall endeavor to produce an impression.

Emma is preparing to come out tonight at a great party. Her mother has been employed rigging her for a week past. She is rather young I think, to begin but she has great ideas in her head already about fashion and dress.

The gay season is now at its height. There are twenty or thirty balls given in New York and Brooklyn every week. If you imagine in Bucksport that the days of balls and dancing belong to the days of our fathers and mothers you have only to spend a week here now to be undeceived. If I only knew how to dance I should take great pleasure in going. I have attended several but I am obliged to walk through the figures and don't get hold of it quite as I thought I could. A friend gave me a ticket for one this morning, next Wednesday at the Shakespearean Hotel, which is going to be a splendid affair.

I have grown to be very domestic lately. I caught a bad cold somehow or other and staid at home seven evenings in succession. I have entirely gotten rid of my cold and got sleep enough to last me a month. But I think it altogether better to stay home. If we only had anything to make home pleasant, I should do so a great deal more, but it is rather dull to sit down all alone and spend the evening when there is so much fun going on around you. I have joined a library in Brooklyn where I can obtain any quantity of books and shall improve my mind part of my evenings at least.

NEW YORK, *February* 16, 1848

I rec'd your letter of the fifth all right, and I must give you the credit of writing a very interesting one. Your muse must have been inspired with news for you told me more than ever I knew. I see Bucksport has lost none of its propensity for gossip.

As to Tim's being intemperate, it's the first that ever I heard of it. I never saw him the least disguised from drinking. He wishes me to refute the charge but we had a good laugh about it.

As to the story about me, it is just as I expected and wonder that I have not heard of something of the kind

before. But they have got on the wrong track. The old *maids* in B. will have hard work to find out when I am engaged to any girl. I have not seen the Thompsons since they moved from Brooklyn last Nov. You appear to be having some parties at Bucksport, but the idea of having whist is a new one there. I am glad they are introducing it. I suppose you and those other families left out constitute an *Upper Ten-dom*, in the place. People will do so in every place, small or large. I have to adapt myself to all classes of men and women and small children but always move in the first society if you can, that is my motto. I have found out that it is altogether better to get an honest living and live in a parlor and wear kid gloves than live in a camp and haul cord wood, a life which I once thought would suit me.

I attended the great Mendelssohn Concert at Castle Garden. The tickets were gratis. Of course there was something of a crowd, probably 10,000 persons. It took us an hour to get out. Last night Arthur and I went to a concert given by the young ladies of the Female Academy. There was a grand display of kids and white dresses and curls. About two hundred of the scholars did the singing. Some of the pieces were very fine and as many pretty girls as ever I have seen in one room together.

If you want something to amuse you in Bucksport why don't you get up some *Model Artistes*. They are all the rage out here. There are a dozen troupes in the city now. Statue of the Greek Slave is completely outdone by living models. Nobody goes to see marble statues now. What an age we live in! — to say nothing of chloroform.

I do not attend dancing school. Reason: not money enough.

I am perfectly willing for you to show Mother my letters. I don't intend to do anything that I am ashamed to have her know.

NEW YORK, *March* 3, 1848

I have sat down to write you some news. Last night about four o'clock wind northwest commenced snowing and this morning there is at least six inches. I have actually ridden from South ferry to Union Park and back again in a sleigh! They will soon wear it out for Broadway is full of sleighs. Everybody is bound to have one ride.

We are having considerable excitement here just now. Next Monday the Grand Fancy Dress Ball at the Astor Place Opera House. Tuesday, Mr. Clay arrives. (Won't there be a crowd!) I will send you the papers containing an account of these affairs when they come off. Other affairs remain about the same.

I hear from Eliza L. that Hannah Buck is going to be married. Tell all the old maids in Bucksport there're hopes, never despair. I have nothing else to do but write letters so I am going to make you pay postage until you cry enough.

NEW YORK, *March* 30, 1848

All that is talked about here now is the French Revolution. There are a great many French in the city and they are perfectly mad with joy. They met on the Battery yesterday and fired one hundred guns and the Tricolor flag is flying in all parts of the city. Success to them, I say.

You probably know what I wrote Father about going into business. I think it will be better than clerking it, even if I make no more than my expenses the first year, which is all that I expect to do as business is very dull just now. However, I shall be in the way of learning business more than I should as a clerk. I believe it is some time since you have written me. I think it likely there is a letter on the way.

Remember me to Mother. Tell her that it is so much trouble to send to B. that I shall get my shirts made here to order, besides it is coming warmer weather and I think that I shall button my coat up to my chin and wear a paper collar and thus save a shirt altogether.

P.S. John Jacob Astor is dead. Hope he left me half his property.

NEW YORK, *April* 24, 1848

I had been looking for some time for a letter, when I rec'd yours of the 13th. You wrote a good long one, however, and that makes up for the time. I am sorry to hear that 'there is something rotten in Bucksport,' a place, of all others, where I should least expect to hear of such things. It will keep the old maids in gossip for a month, I suppose. Tim talks of going to Bucksport soon, then you and Lizzie Blodget can overhaul him. I have not told him of anything that you wrote me, but I believe him honest, although he will lie the legs off of any horse.

Chartered a vessell this day, for Orinoca. The commissions will come to $30, and if government takes the ship we have offered for Vera Cruz, it will be $50 more, which will last us this week. Enough of business.

Truly the last days in our house have been gay. Mrs. James has staid and Sarah starts for Wrentham with her Thursday. Saturday we had the *Heiress* and several other folks from Brooklyn and had a grand blow out at the house. Fish gave us his pantomime of the schoolmaster, etc. Sunday passed off as usual. It being Easter, they had some extra good music at church. Today we are warned to quit. The last meal has been cooked and she has already commenced packing up her furniture. 'O now, forever farewell,' as Othello says. The tranquil mind, the baggatelle board and the social game of whist and all the fond associations that cling around the house,

No. 106 Clinton Street. We have got to come to the cold manners and cold vituals of a boarding house.

I have not had a letter from father since I have been in business. I suppose he is reserving his wrath or his pleasure, I don't know which. Tell him I should like to see a cargo of lumber sent to us, for I want some money very much.

NEW YORK, *May* 18, 1848

Thimotheus leaves this afternoon for Chelsea, where he intends to stop a week and then produce a sensation in Bucksport, so this letter will be rather out of date when you get it but it will save you 10¢, which is more than it is worth.

We are enjoying most lovely weather. The public grounds, the Park and Battery are dressed out in their summer attire as well as the ladies that walk in them. My boarding house is but a few steps from Broadway, not much like quiet Clinton Street in Brooklyn. I believe there is no time night or day, but what carriages or people are passing, but I have gotten used to it and can sleep just as well. We have a very pleasant company at the house, including a lady who came yesterday and took dinner with white kids on, which I suppose must be the latest fashion. Although I have been there scarcely a fortnight I have become acquainted with most of them. We don't live in the same house here in New York for months and not know each other. We have several married folks and the rest young uns of both sexes. We live in fashionable style: breakfast at half past seven, dine at three. Supper is not much account, on the whole I am very well contented.

Last evening Tim and our friend Bob and myself attended the Broadway Theatre to see Anderson play in the 'Lady of Lyons' and he played the part better than ever

I saw it done before. By the way, when Henry Blodget was here he went to see Christy's Minstrels (tell it not in Gath). Harry is a sensible fellow, I think.

There was a great influx of white cravats last week. The most interesting part of the performance was the Abolition breakfast at the Colosseum, when the whites gave the black waiters and cooks a meal and waited on them, reversing the usual order of things. The Hutchinsons honored them with their presence. They could sing their abolition songs without being hissed. It must have been a most *savory* meal. How John Buck would have enjoyed it, *he what!*

I send you by Tim 'Oh Susannah,' which the Christys *do sing* great. You should hear them sing it once. I guess it will be new to you. If you think of any other, write me and I will send it along. They beat *Dumboltons*, whom you heard, all to pieces. I hope they will take a turn down East this summer so that you can hear them.

NEW YORK, *June* 22, 1848

It is cloudy today, much to the relief of us poor mortals who have been gasping with the mercury at 96 in the shade all last week. On Monday it cooled off a little and we had a steady thunder shower from noon till midnight. 'The electric fluid magnified' on Grace Church and shivered the Cross on the spire. (I don't wonder at that church being visited.) Also struck in Hoboken and burned several houses. I was over to the North River and saw it.

Last Sunday I spent at Mr. Thompson's, down in Jersey. There were five of us went down and we had a delightful time (barring the mosquitoes). His farm is in the midst of a fine section of country and his house stands on the bank of a small river. Taking it altogether, it is one of the prettiest places that I have ever visited.

We rode to church, eleven of us, in his family vehicle. Went to a regular country church, reminded me of Orland on the Hill. All the eyes in the house were directed at Thompson's pew. His daughters are decidedly the *Bon Ton* of the village. We strolled over the fields, went in bathing and smoked any quantity of cigars. You can't imagine how I enjoy the fields and woods after staying so long on paved streets.

How does Tim enjoy himself? He thought he should be very discontented. Tell him the best remedy is to go to work. How does Gen. Taylor's cause flourish in Bucksport? Does Father go in for him? I intend to vote for him next fall if I live. Have you given up your journey to the White Mountains? I hope you will be able to go and while you are about it you better go to Saratoga. Enjoy yourself now while you are young. What is the use to spend the best part of your life at home? That is my doctrine.

Well, I guess when you have read this letter, as Mose says, you will make the observation: *gas!* But I have written just what comes into my head, hit or miss.

NEW YORK, *August* 18, 1848

On my passage up (from Bucksport) in the boat with no one on board I knew, I came very near being homesick. The pleasant hours which I had spent especially at your house and all the associations connected, came over me and I actually felt attached to the place more than ever, and as I watched it fading away in the distance I determined, if circumstances will permit, to make a pilgrimage to it once a year. The friends I have there are friends indeed, I believe, and I felt more regret at parting than when I left before. However, it is not my nature to remain lonely. I observed a young girl come on board from Belfast, alone. She was sitting near me and looked

as if she wanted me to break the ice. I commenced talking with her and she soon told me her story. She lived in Northport and was going to Boston on a visit with her parents. I told her that I had also left my home to seek my fortune, which so enlisted her sympathies that she kindly presented me with a 'Pond Lilly.' 'Oh woman, etc.' Finding her superlatively green, I retired to my berth to ruminate on the past and live over again the 'moments snatched from Paradise,' which I enjoyed at Bucksport ever since that memorable evening when I assisted that angelic form over the fort. But I must not indulge in such foolish fancies. Give my love to Father and Mother and believe me, Yours infernally.

NEW YORK, *September* 24, 1848

Sunday afternoon. Friend Henshaw has just gone into his own room to take a nap and is playing on a flute most diabolically, so I thought I would give you some scenes from life in New York.

This morning we went to Dr. Mason's church in Bleeker Street and after dinner came to the conclusion one such sermon was as much as a man could well digest in one day. The weather is cold as November but I have a fire place in my room and we have got up quite a decent fire out of an old book case and some cigar boxes, so we have been laying off at home.

I formerly had a front room and used to amuse myself with watching a gambling house opposite where Sam Suydam holds out and I could write some of the mysteries of New York if I should set out. Since my return I occupy a room in the rear where I have a more interesting field of view, comprising the rear of four large houses that front on 'Park Place.' They give me all the chance in the world, for they don't close their shutters. Directly opposite my window is the room of Mrs. Abbott, a well-

known actress at the Broadway Theatre. She is a widow and there are a couple of young *snobs* in her room, one playing on the piano. Her room appears to be fitted up with great taste.

The room beneath contains a new-married couple, I think.

The next house below has one room where a family lives. I see a very pretty girl sitting in the window who is lame. She is apparently during the week making dolls. Whether to sell or amuse herself, I don't know. Her father looks like a Frenchman.

Underneath is the office of a French newspaper, where a confounded printing press keeps click-clacking all night, Sundays and all.

In the next house above, you might see two women who look much disturbed. The reason I will give you. Henshaw and myself, while quietly smoking about an hour ago, observed the two old maids (for I can tell one at any distance) holding a consultation, and the Devil instantly put it into our heads to disturb their peace of mind. We have a long tube with which we can propel a putty ball a long distance, as true as a gun. The first shot struck the window — slap! — which caused them to draw back and probably utter a short shriek. We had our blinds closed so they could not see us and we could see every motion of theirs. One of them got up, put on her spectacles and looked at the window. While she was looking, we slapped the window again. All at once she started and went up stairs. We saw her come into the room above where were two Bridgets most innocently reading. I could see by her motions that she laid it to them. In order to clear them we hit their window. She was now completely astonished, shoved up the window, looked all round. Sent one of the girls after a spy-glass and commenced spying at a house above us. While she

was leaning out the window, we fired one which struck within an inch of her nose. Heavens! How black she looked. She drew back, shut down the window and folded her hands in despair. All this was very amusing to us. It was one of the best pantomimes that I ever have seen. The two worthies are now sitting in their old place, looking at the stains of putty on the glass and then racking their brains to discover somebody and vowing vengeance no doubt. However, I think we have worried them enough.

I have lately provided myself with quite a lot of books and stay at home most of my evenings. The first of November I am going to dancing school and also begin to study French. The dancing school will be an amusement and the rest of the time I will study. I really don't know what to do with myself when night comes and throw away my time in the most foolish manner, always attended with some expense too. I think it will be cheaper and better to do what I propose. I should like to join some singing society besides, and think I shall.

NEW YORK, *October* 14, 1848

I received a letter from you by Sewall and had written you just before. I have nothing new to communicate but I thought it was best to let you know that Sewall left last night in the good schooner Emma, bound for Bangor; so you may look for him in the course of the winter. He exhibited a most depraved mind while he was here. He was more pleased with the horse race at the race course down on the Island, than anything he saw. He visited all the theatres, from the Chatham and Mose up to the Astor Place Opera House, where we saw Macready. Macready is the best actor on the stage, so the criticks say. I like him much better than Forrest. He played Othello the night we saw him, which is my favorite

tragedy. I attended the theatre five times in one fortnight on account of Henry Darling and Sewall and I have got enough and have sworn off for a fortnight. I think I shall hold out all winter.

I have been very busy for a fortnight past but have not made much. It is more trouble to sell a cargo of lumber than it is worth. We have had a cargo from Florida that the owner has drawn on us at sight for the money, before the lumber was sold. We raised the money, however, and our credit is good yet, but you must not be surprised to hear of our failure at any time.

I have sent a barrel of walnuts to Father. He will not probably want the whole and you are the next of *kin*. I should like to spend Thanksgiving at home but can't very well.

NEW YORK, *November* 15, 1848

Probably the weather is gloomy enough. It rains half the week and every Sunday. I have not seen the inside of a church this three weeks. I hope it will not last long. The winter season has fairly begun here. We had a snow storm Saturday night. This is the gay season also, in the city and amusements of all kinds are plenty and cheap. We have seven theatres and an opera in full blast. Mr. Frey has got up an excellent company at the Astor Place House and the price to the upper circle is only 25¢. Cheap enough! to hear an orchestra of sixty performers and a chorus of eighty voices. We made up a party and went Monday night to hear Lucia. Madame Laborde and Benedetti sang it grandly and the orchestra is the best I ever heard. Ye Gods, such strains as they bring out. Enough to lift you off your seat out of this world. Talk about the Hutchinson family and these quartettes — they are 'nowhere.' I do enjoy music and shall take 25¢ worth occasionally. It is worth that to look at the hand-

some women and their dresses. This is the headquarters of fashion and the fashion seems to be to stick as many flowers in the hair as possible and to get the dress as low in the neck as possible. Modesty can swallow anything that is fashion. When are you and I going to be able to hire a sofa there, Mary?

I am getting on bravely in dancing. I am taking lessons of Mr. Charaud and there are between sixty and seventy scholars. It is not as much fun as I anticipated, to stand up and be drilled for three hours. However, after the lesson is over we pair off and have a cotillion, all gentlemen of course. We learn the waltz and the polka, besides. 'Only think of the idea,' you will say, 'of Frank dancing the polka.' It is not as hard to learn as I imagined. We have eight soirees or assemblies during the winter to which we have the privilege of taking our lady friends, so I shall have dancing enough. I hope I shall come out polished but it's a rough subject, you know.

Well, Taylor is elected. Hurrah! I made a hat and a pair of gloves out of it and voted for him, too. New York did nobly and so did Maine.

I am very much obliged to you for that cravat.

Tim's mother leaves week after next. Tim still continues to loaf as usual.

Here endeth the first lesson from

Your affectionate brother.

NEW YORK, *December* 1, 1848

I spent quite a Yankee Thanksgiving. Dined at Uncle's with Arthur, Maria and Mrs. Peters and daughter. After dinner walked up to Tim Smith's and called on the Misses Baldwin and had a sing. In the evening treated myself to the Broadway Theatre for the first time. As usual, on a public night it was crammed full. The orchestra played Hail Columbia and Yankee Doodle and

the acting was very good, but the great attraction was the Ballet Company, The Monplasirs, that were performing there. As Johnathan Slick says: 'It was a little the tallest dancing that ever I seed.' Madame is said to be next to Fanny Ellsler. She certainly throws herself most extensively. I enjoyed myself very much, on the whole, but I should have liked to have been at your merrymaking better. You must write me how the day was spent in B. and how the singing went.

Give my respects to all. Alfred and wife desire to be remembered to you and husband. All the Saints salute you.

NEW YORK, *December* 2, 1848

Yours of the 24th came duly to hand, although I waited a long time for it. I had about given you up, but that made it the more interesting when it did come. To-day it rains and business is awfully dull, so to keep busy I will answer your letter. Now that we have started right lets keep so. I shall not write you until you have answered mine if it is three months, and you may do the same. It's not such a great job for you to write me once a month. Take Sunday for it. When I have nothing to do I had rather be writing than not.

I am sorry to hear that you could not get through Thanksgiving without a row with your Mother. You must humor her, Mary, in all her fancies, but I guess it's of no great account anyway. I had heard from R. P. B. that Father was going to Lynn but did not believe it. On some accounts I am sorry that he has sold his house. We have a great many pleasant associations connected with it and no other place that he can go to will ever seem like home. But if he can do better to emigrate, I say go, but while he is about it he had better go to California. Have you read the account from there about the Gold? There

is no *humbug* about it. I have seen letters from Captains whom I know, who write that their men have all run away and are digging up $20 a day, PURE GOLD, for some of it has been sent home. It has created a real fever here. Two steamships sailed yesterday and there are five vessels advertised for California. Several young men of my acquaintance are going out and you need not be at all surprised to hear of my going. I shall not go unless I can get some chance in trade to fall back on, but if I only had about $1000 to invest in goods, wouldn't I sail! (Oh, Poverty, thou art a crime!) But I shall wait my time.

To come back to your epistle. There is no danger of my rooming with Tim. He will stop with his uncle as I supposed. I am as much disgusted with him as you can be, although I treat him as a friend. He is a most artful deceiver, but I have found him out. I know some things about him which he little dreams of, but I spare his feelings. If he thought I knew it we should be enemies at once. I am in the confidence of a certain young lady in New York who has shown me certain documents with *his name attached* and she has it in her power to bring an *action* for *breach of promise* at any time. All this has been transacted since his engagement with Ann, during last summer. I wish you could read one letter. I should like to have Ann see it! Oh, Lord! — wouldn't there be a row. Now, Mary, don't say that I never make you my *confident*, and let me see if you will betray me, for I am the only person in the secret and if Ann and Tim wish to marry, let them do it and then find out these things afterward. We have nothing to say about it.

Miss Wallace is no more to me than a half dozen others I flirt with. I don't go the whole figure as Tim does, and *engage* myself to every young lady I fancy. I don't think that is exactly right, even if I could succeed in doing it. I don't think of *noosing* myself for the present.

I have become very industrious lately. We have gotten up a class in French and meet two evenings in the week at Doctor Pond's and Baldwin's. Harriet and her brother belong to it. Ten in all at two dollars apiece. We have a Frenchman for a teacher who teaches us to speak and write it. I am very much interested in it and am determined to master it. I have stopped loafing around the city and it costs much less to spend my evenings in this manner, besides, I am getting some solid benefit. What an accomplished brother you will have! I am fast getting initiated into the mysteries of the polka and the redowa, all the rage in the ballroom, and when I get so as to 'Parley-vous Francais' — Je n'ai pas peur ni honte. I shall forget my Yankee origin. But I shall never forget you, my dear sister. You seem to write as though I were in fault in this respect, but you are dearer to me the longer I live without seeing you. I wish we could live near each other but our paths diverge from each other for the present.

The latest excitement is the row at the Opera between the manager and Benedetti, the tenor. There was a rich scene, not mentioned in the bills, that took place the other night. Mr. Frey lammed Benedetti in the face and Benedetti made a pass at him with his sword. I will send you the papers with a full account.

NEW YORK, *December* 17, 1848

When I took your letter out of the Post Office this morning I said to myself, 'Now here comes a blast from Mary!' for from what Father wrote, I thought I had thrown you all into fits, but I am rejoiced to see from your letter that you think in some measure as I do. When I heard the accounts from the gold region I thought, at first, it was all *humbug*, gotten up to induce people to emigrate. But now I am fully convinced and the most

slow to believe are also. I have seen letters from the son of Secretary Macey to a friend in the city. A. G. has received letters from his agent. Uncle Richard has had letters from Captains he sent out and also from two young men who took out goods last Spring. These young men have made $40,000 and one of them is coming home with it. A. G.'s agent, Bob Parker, (you know him) writes that he has sold out his goods at an enormous profit. He kept one man constantly weighing gold dust and he has $100,000 on hand and was going down to Mazatlan to exchange it for coin. Young Macey writes that he did not believe it at San Francisco and went up to the mines to see for himself. He saw them washing out the gold in tin pans and digging it up with sheath knives. One man got $4,000 in one day, but the most of them about $50 to $100 per day. This is hard to believe but all the letters and accounts go to prove that the half has not been told us. Great quantities have been sent here to the banks and Mint. I have *seen* some of it *myself*, in little scales and grains, pure as our gold coin.

But there is another proof, yet. Look out on the docks and you will see from twenty to thirty ships loading with all kinds of merchandise and filling up with passengers, and when I see business firms — rich men — going into it, men who know how to make money too, and young men of my acquaintance leaving good situations and fitting themselves out with arms and ammunition, tents, provisions and mining implements, there is something about it — the excitement, the crossing the Isthmus, seeing new countries and the prospect of making a fortune in a few years — that takes hold of my imagination, that tells me 'Now is your chance. Strike while the iron is hot!'

You know that I am in the prime of life — a good constitution, know how to shovel, can live in a log house

or a tent, and build one too. You know that I always had a desire to travel, to see something of the world. Now, when shall I ever have a better chance? I can hardly make a living here. We have no capital to carry on business with and it will be a long time before we can get a start. Labor is *capital* out there. I am assured by persons that have lived there that it is a fine country, perfectly healthy and room enough for us all.

I have looked at the subject in all its bearings. I have looked at my chance here and I have made up my mind to go and I am going if I have to go out as a common sailor. It has taken nearly every cent I have made here to pay my expenses as I go along so I have but very little money on hand. Uncle Richard has very kindly given me one hundred dollars and intends to send us a consignment of goods. There are five of us going out together. John Benson goes on Saturday to look after their business. We have paid our passage in the Steam Ship Panama, which sails from Panama on the Pacific, the 15th of February, for San Francisco. We go from here to Chagres in a sailing vessel and cross the land to Panama.

Now, my dear sister, much as I regret leaving you and my parents for so long a time, still I think it is the best thing I can do. I thought you would approve of it and believe me I feel greatly obliged to you for your good intentions. I wish I could see and embrace you once more but there is not time for me to come home. Don't look on the dark side — that's my philosophy — but think of those *$4,000 lumps* that I am going to pick up and remit to you.

Harriett Pond is full of it. Her brother is one of our party and she thinks about going herself.

Captain Cole is in the office now. Says 'Tell Mary I am going with my vessel.'

It is time for me to go to supper and I must stop. The

weather is beautiful and warm. The cholera is still killing them off at Staten Island and there has been one case in the city but, as you suppose, we think nothing of it. The California fever has actually frightened it off.

NEW YORK, *January* 3, 1849

Saturday night Captain Cole and myself rode out to Harlem and Monday evening after I got through making calls, we got in with a merry set and rode out to Bloomingdale and sung ourselves hoarse. New York, 'with all thy faults I love thee still.' After all there is no place that I feel so much at home in, as this vast city. I know every street and alley in it and every corner and building. From the Battery to Union Park is as familiar to me as the front street in Bucksport.

I called on all my friends Monday, but could not bid any of them a serious farewell as the girls would not believe that I am going. Although, my dear sister, you are not here to pack me off, yet I am not altogether forgotten by your sex. The girls have met at Frank Pond's and had a Sewing Bee and presented each of us, on New Year's Day, with a Bachelor's Companion — a bag to roll up, containing needles, thread, scissors, buttons, etc. A very nice affair, gotten up with good taste and very acceptable. They are evidently laying an anchor to windward and want some of the *dust.*

You probably know by Father's letter that I am going around the Horn with Captain Cole. *The plot thickens!* We shall take the Brig down town this afternoon. She has been put in complete order, caulked, coppered and painted. We are going to have a fine cabin, have torn the old one all to pieces, and shall have it fitted up in good style for ten passengers. Our list of stores is made out and we are going to live high. I shall purchase 100 volumes of books, at least, and exchange my French for Spanish and

learn that on the voyage. It is a long time to be at sea — four months and a half at least. We shall stop at the Isthmus of Panama and at Valparaiso. I should much prefer going across, but Uncle Richard made me such a good offer that I could not refuse it. It will be much better, after I get there, to go in this way, for I have a place to live and something to eat. If we have a pleasant set of passengers we shall enjoy ourselves, no doubt.

I received your present and I am greatly obliged to you and will spend it, or part of it, in writing materials and keep a journal for your perusal. Please accept from me a trifle, which I send by Sewall, and distribute to Frank, Charles and Alice as my New Year's gift. I will write next New Year's from California.

Give my love to Mother. That is the best New Year's I can send her, and for her sake and yours, I will try and resist all the temptations I may be exposed to. I have no fears on this subject, myself.

I will write you again before we sail, which will probably be one week from to-day.

NEW YORK, *January* 17, 1849

Ho for California and the Gold Regions!
Westward the Star of Empire takes its Way!

So does the George Emery tomorrow! No doubt you thought us off before this but we have been getting ready for the last week and are not ready yet.

We have our cargo all on board and to-night the chickens and pigs come down. We have our cabin fitted up in splendid style. The curtains cost 56¢ per yard. We shall take them out and put them up in our house in California. Cole and I have bought everything we can think of for our comfort. We have raced all over New York and made some of the greatest bargains this side of Connecticut. We bought 58 volumes of books for $9.44 and a B. G.

board and one dozen packs of cards. We have 24 rifles, powder and shot, harpoons, fishing tackle and a sail boat and all the little etceteras you can think of, to amuse ourselves on our long voyage. I can't realize that I am going yet, but suppose I shall in about two days.

Our passengers I like the appearance of very well. There are seven of us altogether, all young men but one. One fellow pays Cole $46 for the privilege of working his passage. We can get men enough for nothing. The excitement here at this time, you can have no idea of. Every day witnesses the departure of some gallant ship, swarming with people. The ships Albany, Sutton, Brooklyn, and Apollo sailed last week with over 150 passengers each. Today three left. The H. J. Bartlett that I was to have gone in left today with 67, for Chagres. Benson, Loomis, Pond, Henshaw and a host of my friends go in her. They don't go off *boohooing* but go in good spirits.

The docks are crowded with fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters and sweethearts, and such embracing and waving of handkerchiefs and 'I say Bill! If you send me a barrel of Gold Dust don't forget to pay the freight on it!'. One fellow who went in the Brooklyn, threw his last five dollar piece ashore. Says he: 'I'm going where there is plenty more!'. 'Now boys, give 'em the cheers,' and the boys from the ship give us nine back with a will. All those that have friends bid them farewell and those who have none shake hands with themselves and cut their individual sticks. It beats all!, I declare, this California fever.

Every minister is preaching on the subject. Geologists are lecturing on it. It is dramatised at the theatres and it is the subject of conversation everywhere. Even clerks' salaries have gone up, so many have left.

Tell Father, that the best thing he can do is to follow

me, if he has his business closed up. We will have a house put up all ready soon after we arrive, as we have four, all framed windows, doors and everything. We ought to have a good carpenter go out with us, though I think I can put one up myself. The worst feature of the business is: there are no females going out. Everything else that you can think of is going, but the ladies hang back. What are we going to do? Society is bad, you know, composed all together of either sex. The women must follow the men shortly, or they will be too thick on this side — and to think what rich husbands they could get! I should think this would be an inducement for the old maids of Bucksport to start! This leads me to speak of what Tim told me yesterday.

Says he: 'I shall be married before you get back.' Says I: 'Tim, when is it coming off?' 'Next fall,' says he. 'I think of it seriously.' Thinks I to myself: 'Miss M—— P—— may produce her *documents* before that time and spoil your fun, and serve you right, too.'

I have been enjoying the society of the New York ladies all I could the past two weeks. However, there is no very strong attachment of the heart to cause pangs at leaving, as Connor says.

I would like to spend one evening at home before leaving and see you all once more, but I hope I shall meet you all when I come back — when that will be I can't tell.

Give my best regards to Joseph, Ed, Sewall and all the folks. Tell Sewall I will write him from California and especially remember me to my dear Mother. I wrote her last week and will write Father tonight or tomorrow.

And now, my dear Sister, although I am a long distance from you I feel as though you were by my side and I conversing instead of writing to you. You have the largest share of my affections of any being in this world

and although I may not have shown it in my conduct, yet I do love and think more of you than anyone else, and will remain,

Ever your affectionate brother.

RIO DE JANEIRO, *March* 11, 1849

I have just finished writing to Father and will tell the rest of my story to you. Read his letter for a preface and then commence on 'Adventures in Rio.'

Pulled ashore this morning. (The Custom House officer tells us to pull alongside of the guard ship every time and get liberty. A darky sticks his *coca* up over the rail and says: 'You go ashore?' 'Yes.' 'Go.' And we go.) After Captain Cole had entered the vessel and we had imbibed two mint juleps and swallowed the ice (for be it known unto you that although it is March, the mercury only stands at 86° in the shade) and had cucumbers and water cresses and lettuce for dinner and oranges and bananas for dessert (doesn't this make your mouth water?) we proceeded to find a guide, or country pilot, and found just the fellow exactly. He knew everything about the country besides a great deal that he didn't know. He took us to a stable and we bargained for the *cattle* through him for six milreas for the day. Behold us all mounted, seven Yankees and the guide, on the easiest-going, ambling horses that ever I mounted. We put in the spurs and dashed down the streets, scattering swarms of darkies with great baskets on their heads and astonishing the natives. I tell you we were full of fun — just like boys let loose from school.

Our road lay along the shores of the Bay and it is lined with most splendid residences — and such gardens! They have a climate here in which things will grow! The plants were all new to me, but the cocoanut and the banana trees are the finest. The gardens are fenced with

brick walls, plastered over with large arches for gateways and fountains and statuary scattered about. The houses I can't describe. Instead of being made to keep the cold out, the main thing is to let it in — to keep cool as possible.

We rode along among the mountains, every now and then meeting parties of our countrymen, cruising around on jackasses, some in carriages having a jolly time. I was surprised to meet several of my old friends from New York in this far-off country. Our guide took us out to the Botanical Garden, about eight miles. We left our horses at a public house close by and ordered a Brazilian dinner (à la mode) and went into the garden. This is the nearest the tales of the Arabian Nights of anything I can imagine. Here we wandered through groves of orange trees where they are as plentiful as apples in an orchard. We saw the breadfruit, tea plant, coffee and dates growing here. The garden is on a level plot of ground completely enclosed in mountains and contains about ten acres. It has streams of water running through it and is handsomely laid out in walks, arbors, etc. They allowed us to pluck as many flowers as we liked and I cut a bamboo stick which lies in my berth. I wish I could have sent you a bouquet.

Having satisfied our curiosity and given the little darkies some milreis, we adjourned to dinner. Here we found for the first course ham and eggs, omelette, roast chicken, beefsteak, etc.; next, bananas, oranges, guava jelly, citrons, green cheese and claret and Madeira wine; next, coffee — and such coffee! It was the pure juice and would bear up a marlinspike point downwards. After having done justice to this, as a particular favor, we sang 'Oh Susannah' and several other melodies which probably those hills and valleys had never heard before. Then we mounted our steeds and started.

It is very seldom you get a sight of the ladies (I mean the 'Ton') here. They appear to be kept very snug and are not seen gawking out of the windows or walking the streets. On our way back, however, we spied three at an open window in one of the most stylish houses we had seen. They looked white enough and delicate, and one was very pretty.

As we got close to the city we were overtaken by a genuine *Broadway Omnibus*, the first ever seen in the country, I guess. It was brand new and drawn by eight jackasses and postillions for drivers. It was filled with New York boys who saluted us with shouts of 'Broadway Bleeker! Ride up!' It really looked natural. We formed an escort with our eight horsemen and escorted it into town, drove to the house of the American Consul, Gorham Parks, and gave him nine cheers which brought out several females on the balcony, who bowed their thanks. As the stage thundered through the streets (a new sound to them here) it brought crowds to the windows to see the wonder and we got a glimpse of quite a number of the natives. The people are very polite. If we touch our caps to the officers we meet, they return it.

In the Rue Ovidoro (the Broadway of Rio) the shops are very handsome. Some of the finest artificial stores I ever saw. The churches are rich in ornaments as well as bells, which they amuse themselves by ringing most all the time. I should like to visit some of the convents, but can't without taking the veil, which I don't feel like doing.

There are three theatres, but I can't hear of any opera. We intend to visit one of them before we leave. Tomorrow is Sunday and we are going to visit some of the churches. Monday we shall get ready for sea. Tuesday, sail.

We enjoy ourselves very much on board. Our library contains over 150 volumes and we have cards, chess and

backgammon — besides the beautiful scenery: sky and water. 'Sometimes we ship a sea and sometimes see a ship.'

The evenings in the tropics coming out were beautiful. The air was so mild and there appeared to be twice as many stars as there are North. The only trouble is, we get so confounded lazy, having nothing to do but kill time — and a warm climate at that. We have some music on board: two violins and two flutes and two of the passengers sing. We practice every day.

Tuesday, 13th, 1849

I must add a codicil to my letter as the Ship Martha that I send by does not sail until tomorrow.

Yesterday, two of us visited one of the old convents, such a one as you read about. We wandered through the garden and chapel and as far into the sacred enclosure as those holy iron gates would allow us to, but couldn't get a sight of a *Nun*.

In the evening, hearing that the Emperor was going to be present we took a box at the theatre for six, at three dollars and a half. The theatre is about as large as the Park at New York and is finished with a parquet and three tiers of boxes, all partitioned off into private boxes. The end, in front of the stage, is all taken up by the Emperor's box and enclosed in curtains. After the overture the curtains were drawn aside and the whole audience arose while the royal pair advanced to the front, bowed and seated themselves in two arm chairs, the background being filled with officers and the Maids of Honor, I suppose.

His Imperial Highness, Dom Pedro the Second, is a fine looking fellow. Stands about six feet two, has a very dignified look for so young a man (he is only twenty two). He was dressed in plain black and white kids and wore

only a star to distinguish him. The Empress is very plain. She was dressed in black with short sleeves and the only thing handsome about her was her *fan*. She is the daughter of the King of Naples.

As to the rest of the audience it looked rather gay on account of the number of naval and army officers present in full uniform. There were soldiers stationed at every door and a guard drawn up in the street in front and in front of the stage.

The ladies I was disappointed in. I saw but two or three beauties. In every box they had their slaves to take care of the children for the whole family appeared to come and there was about as much squalling as at a baptism in church.

The orchestra was large and played first-rate. The performances were by the Ravel family and a farce afterwards which was very interesting to us on account of the language.

One of our party came very near losing his character. Poor *Fonda* went ashore with a thin linen coat on. When we came to go up stairs to our box, the man in the passage stopped him. What for we couldn't find out for some time. At last we took the hint. Nothing but *black coats* would pass. In vain we tried to tell him by signs that Fonda had better coats on board; that he was a *gentleman;* that we were *Americans* and didn't know the rules. 'Twas no go. We finally found the man from whom we bought the tickets, who could speak some English and he got him in on condition that he would keep in the shady side of the box. Luckily the rest of us were in full dress. One of the Californians came into the pit with a linen coat on and they actually put him out. So you see that it is *coats* not *men* here. Poor Fonda won't get over that this voyage.

When the Emperor retired, we distinguished foreigners

retired of course and arrived safely on board with the help of a boat and two darkies, at one o'clock. We expect to sail tomorrow morning.

CALLAO, *May* 31, 1849

I embrace the opportunity of the mail from here to Panama to write you.

One hundred and twenty four days from N.Y.; seventy one from Rio and we dropped our anchor on Peruvian ground in the Bay of Callao. We intended to stop at Valparaiso but, getting a fair wind off that port and it being a bad harbor to get out of, we kept on, much to my gratification as it had given me an opportunity of visiting Lima, a place which I have heard a great deal of and had a greater desire to visit.

To go back to our voyage. Thus far we are ahead of most of the fleet that sailed with us. Although we have had a long passage around the Horn, I can't begin to give you any idea of the weather we had. When in lat. 40° south we took the first taste of it. We had a gale of wind from southwest and laid hove to six days, accompanied by terrible hail squalls. I thought I had felt the wind blow before but nothing like this. The wind would fairly take the water along with it. The brig, with not a rag of sail on, would careen over, lee gunnels under water. Hard up the helm got her before the wind and she would bound madly over the waves at the rate of ten miles an hour. This would last for about fifteen minutes and then settle into a hard gale again. When it did not blow a gale it was calm and then you can imagine the sea knocking us about. This is a fair sample of the weather all the way.

We were blown off to the east of the Falklands, passed between Tierra del Fuego and the coast, got by the Cape forty miles by observation. We sailed a week and then found ourselves sixty miles to the east of it, struck down

south to lat. 59° south, had the snow six inches deep on deck one night, and finally got to the west of it. We beat all the way against a gale of wind up the coast to lat. 40° south. We took the trades in 28° and ten days after, arrived here.

Day after day, week after week and month after month rolled on and we kept sailing. I really think that the greater part of this earth's surface is covered with water. You no doubt think such a voyage tedious, but you get used to it. The vessel becomes the whole world to you and walking the deck is equal to and answers the purpose of walking miles ashore.

We caught albatrosses ten feet from tip to tip, with a hook and line. Harpooned porpoises, saw immense schools of sperm whales and other things too numerous to mention. What *yarns* I can tell when I get home. For further accounts of these regions I refer you to Watts' hymns: 'I would not live always,' etc.

But here we are, once more safely moored in a safe harbor, and, sailor-like, Cape Horn and its hail storms are all forgotten. Let me add that the Brig G. E. has behaved herself nobly. We lost our stern boat but have not had a sea board us to do any damage and have not carried away a spar; outsailed everything we saw except one ship. She now looks better than she did when she left New York.

Callao harbor, formed by the island of San Lorenzo, is fine. The wind blows constantly one way and never a gale. The ocean is literally *Pacific* about here. There are forty vessels lying here (six ships of war) of all nations. We lie close by a large French Frigate and they have most excellent music every evening.

Callao is a mean, dirty hole, filled with sailor grog shops and low taverns. The castle is all that there is interesting in it. This is very large, covering ten or fifteen acres of

ground and mounted once one hundred and forty five guns. It is now used for the Custom House and Prison.

The houses are built one story mostly, of adobe and stucco or plastered and painted yellow. The population is about three thousand. We walked all over it in about fifteen minutes and were ready to go to Lima.

From the Bay you have a fine view of Lima. It is situated in the plain which runs back to the base of the Andes, about nine miles from Callao. This plain is almost level and rises gently back to the mountains and, until you get within a mile or two of the city, is almost barren. The Andes rise up close to the city and tower above the clouds, their tops covered with snow. I thought the mountains at Rio were some, but they are not to be compared with these. It is only at sunrise and sunset that you can see them distinctly, then they are sublime!

There are good stages like the New York stages running to Lima every two hours, fare $1. We arrived Sunday evening and went out Tuesday at ten A.M. In a thick cloud of dust we ran into a school of jackasses bound for Callao and ran one under. We made the run, however, inside of an hour. We began to see the manners and customs of the people. We met any quantity of market women riding on donkeys and smoking their cigars very comfortably. They ride remarkably well. Why shouldn't they? — seeing as how they ride *astride* like a man. There was an Indian woman in the coach, one of the passengers passed around some cigars. She took one and lit it up like the rest. There was a French Naval Officer on board, a young fellow full of fun. He spoke little English and broke out singing 'O Carry Me Back,' etc., which I was surprised at in this country. He was with the Prince de Joinville when he visited New York. I saw him at Lima several times. He gave me his card

and a very pressing invitation to call on board his frigate Le Pursevant, lying at Callao.

Well, when you get within a mile of the city the road is laid out similar to the Mall in Boston and on each side orange gardens. This is a favorite promenade of the inhabitants and the gardens are also thrown open. You pass through a large arched gateway (for Lima is walled) and find yourself in the city all at once, as there are no houses outside the walls to be seen.

The coach dropped us near the Grand Plaza. We found the Golden Ball Hotel, ordered dinner and took rooms, and started out to see the *lions*. I stopped three days, came down today and saw all I could see in that time. All that you have heard and read about Lima, at least all that I have, is correct, and the half has not been told you.

I should think the city covered as much ground as N.Y. but the houses are only two and most of them one story high, on account of earthquakes. The inhabitants number from sixty to seventy thousand. The great Cathedral is an immense church and comes up to all my ideas of one of the rich Catholic churches. The great Altar is said to be of solid silver. This I can't swear to as it looked full as much like Brittania ware or pewter, as silver.

The ladies are the most beautiful women I have ever seen. They do wear the Saya manta or Tapada or a splendid canton crepe shawl (instead of your awkward bonnets) drawn over the face, so as to conceal all but one eye. They do have small feet and ankles and they do smoke cigarettes. Yes, thank Heaven I have at last gotten into a place where tobacco smoke is not offensive. Everybody smokes and smoke everywhere: at the dinner table and at the hotel, even. I have been revelling in a cloud of smoke ever since I have been here.

One of the most graceful feats I have ever seen performed by a lady is to see one of these Senoritas smoke. Their walk is also very graceful. You must make some allowances for my being so fascinated as you know I have not seen any females for about four months and being set down in Lima among the prettiest women of the world — you must excuse my admiration of them. Their cigars are very small and the tobacco is rolled up in corn husk or paper. I wish I could send you a bundle.

One of the greatest curiosities is the market. It is held in an open square of about two acres of ground. I visited it in the morning and such a motley crowd of people it would be hard to find anywhere else. They have all the kinds of fruit I ever heard of and a great many kinds that I never heard of. Not only all the tropical fruits but also apples, pears, peaches and all the fruits that you have in Maine.

About half of the common people, soldiers, etc., breakfast here and cooking of all kinds is carried on.

On my way back I went into the Cathedral to mass (for you have to be a Catholic here). When the procession of priests carry around the Host, which is about every day, preceded by a darkey ringing a bell, every one stops and kneels, no matter what they are doing. The officer gets off his horse and the billiard players lay down their cues. All respect religion alike. About this, it is best to 'quety el sombrero' (take off your hat) or you might get your head punched.

Now then to go on with my story. I went into the church. There were about half a dozen little boys chanting in front of the altar. I was very much shocked to see them making signs and smiling at me. When they got through they made a rush for me. One tried to drag me one way and one another. At last I followed one and he led me up in front of a picture and says 'Santa Rosa. Un

rial, Senor, un rial.' Which, being interpreted, means one shilling. Thinks I to myself: 'If it costs a shilling a head to be told the names of all the saints in this church it will break me.' I had work to shake them off and get out again.

There are a great many churches here. Some of them are very rich in gilding and pictures. They are open at all hours and a great many of them have convents attached to them. About every other man we meet is a fat friar in a long, white flannel gown.

It is built like all Spanish cities; every house is a square with an open court in the center and balconies over the streets. The stores around the Plaza are very handsome and the crowd as great as in Broadway. Everything is carried about on the backs of jackasses so the streets are very quiet. To make some noise they keep up an eternal ringing of bells.

The greatest novelty to me was to see the women ride astraddle. They are half Indian and white and are called Cholos. They wear Panama hats and a common dress, but always silk stockings and a rich shawl. It looked kind of queer to me to see them driving about twenty jackasses, loaded with fruit, and smoking. But you soon learn here not to be astonished at anything.

Visited a cotton factory, owned and carried on by a Yankee of course. 'It is as much as a girl can do,' he says, 'to tend one loom.' Visited an infant school. The door was wide open and I stepped in. One little fellow sang out: 'Senora, Americana pur la California.' The Senora invited me to walk in, one fellow brought me a French Grammar that he was studying. In fact, most everybody can speak some French. It is not so hard as I thought it would be to get along in a foreign city. I can make myself understood and the Spanish is easy to get hold of. I think it a beautiful language and mean to learn it, for

after I make a fortune in California I am coming down to Lima. I should like to stop here about a month for I have never seen any place that I was so loath to leave. I am actually homesick.

Well, I must close. I would write a large book but I couldn't send it to you. You may think it hot weather here but it is not so. The wind coming over the snow-covered mountains keeps it just right, from 58° to 80° temperature. Perhaps you have seen in the geography that it never rains in Peru? It's true. The people tell me it never does. The climate is beautiful. Umbrellas are out of date and an American woman with a bonnet looks actually out of place in the street. But this beautiful climate is just what makes them so indolent. They get up at eight o'clock, breakfast at ten, dine at half past two all the way to six. Supper, they never heard of.

We lived first-rate at the hotel for $2.00 per day. Found a man by the name of Haley, from Bangor. He is a printer and has been out here five years. He has his wife with him and invited me to his house. I called. They have adopted all the customs of the country and their children speak Spanish. He is going to California. So is everybody who can get there.

We take two passengers from here and could get as many more if we could carry them. The excitement increases as we near the place. They say nothing ever comes from there. That all the ships are piled up and the men all left. We shall probably sail tomorrow. It takes about fifty days to go from here.

You must prize this letter very much as it costs 62¢ to send it from here to Panama by the British Steamer. This is the last stage and at San Francisco I expect to find letters from you. Til then, 'Adios, Senora.'

You will find a good description of Lima in the U.S. Expedition which used to be in the library at Bucksport.

We have it on board and we found his account correct. It is a valuable work and I advise you to read it.

SAN FRANCISCO, *August* 22, 1849

We arrived here on the sixth of this month and if you received my letter from Callao you will see that we had a long passage up the coast. The wind blows constantly from the north and northwest and when, on the fifteenth of July, we found ourselves 1200 miles to the west of this place and losing ground everyday, we began to dispair and to look around for Jonah to cast him into the sea. But we got here without resorting to this.

As we entered this noble Bay, with a cracking breeze, the blue devils that had been haunting us for the last month left and every countenance was radiant. We sailed up about five miles and rounded a point and the City of San Francisco lay before us. We ran in among a forest of shipping, selected a good berth and after 195 days our anchor once more hooked into Uncle Sam's soil.

In a few minutes we were surrounded with boats. The Captain of the Port came off with John Benson, who remained with us and soon gave us an idea of matters and things. He arrived in April with the company that I was going with. They have split and only part of them continue to dig. John is staying here, speculating in lots.

The first thing was to go ashore and get our letters which we found at Dewitt & Harrison's, and then come off aboard and devour them. I was glad to hear no bad news except the loss of our home. Although I should prefer to find you in Bucksport somewhere, if I should return, yet it may be for Father's best interest to sell out.

I found things here just as I had heard with some few exceptions. The town is growing very fast. You can see it grow every night. It already contains streets and

squares, several large hotels and any quantity of grog shops and gambling saloons. This is carried on with a perfect looseness, night and day. A large number of the houses and stores are merely frames covered with canvas, as it never rains, except in the rainy season, this answers very well.

The situation of the place is very much like Bucksport. The land rises up, however, into high hills back of the town. The whole country is yellow, not a green thing to be seen and not a tree. Right off the town lies the island of Yerba Buena and the shore inside sweeps around in the form of a horseshoe, making a beautiful harbor. There are lying here over 130 vessels, most of them large ships of all nations. The ship of the line Ohio, Steam Ship Mississippi and three other men of war.

The town contains over 5000 inhabitants. Business is brisk. There are thirty or forty new buildings going up. Land is higher than in New York. The most eligible rent for $500 per month and there is not one can be bought for less than $4000. The Parker House built by Bob Parker is *the* hotel, not much larger than yours at Bucksport. It rents for $175,000 per year. Board is $25 per week. Common laborers get one dollar an hour or six per day; mechanics $16; carmen, $3 per load.

In spite of the immense quantities of goods brought here the prices of some still keep up. Tin pans are worth $5, saleratus $1.00 a lb, boots and shoes and hard ware are in good demand, but, alas for our fortunes, provisions are plentiful and cheap. Flour has come from Chili and it is only worth $7. They have glutted the market and some are obliged to sell cargoes at auction to keep them from spoiling. This has ruined our prospects, for you know our cargo was wholly provisions. If we could have looked ahead and seen what to bring we could have made our fortunes. Lumber is worth $300 per thousand. We had

SAN FRANCISCO IN 1849

1. Long Wharf. 2. Apollo Storeship. 3. G. B. Post & Co. 4. Warehouse. 5. The Plaza. 6. The Old Adobe, used as a Custom House. 7. Parker House. 8. Old Post Office. 9. City Hotel. 10. Happy Valley

on deck 4 houses, 14 by 28 feet, framed. They cost $147 apiece and we have sold them for $4000 *and got the dust.* I gave one dollar and a half for a tin pail to put it in.

There is plenty of gold here, no doubt of that. It is legal tender and worth $16 the oz. There is no spurious either. That is all humbug. You can't counterfeit it. When we landed our goods at the foot of Sacramento Street, a little ways from the water, our men washed out several grains of gold. It is found in little scales in the sand. This was right in the street. One man stuck to it all day and got five dollars.

The mines are on the forks of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. The miners average about $16 per day but it is hard and just now hot and sickly. The cost of transportation is so great that it cost them four dollars a day to live. I have seen several of my friends who have returned from the mines, some of them with a thousand dollars, others with a great deal less. From what they have told me I have no desire to go to the diggings. I am satisfied I can make in trade. Land speculation is all the rage and men who bought lots here last winter find themselves rich. We have arrived too late to go into this.

New towns are being laid out every day. There is a large place at the head of navigation, Sacramento City. Another town at the mouth is called Benicia, the government is building a navy yard here. It is impossible to keep sailors here. They get perfectly crazy and are all off for the diggins. Sunday a boat's crew escaped from the Ohio. They fired on them but without effect. We have kept three of our men by promising to pay them off when the vessel is discharged. The Captain and myself had to take hold and work to land cargo but it's no disgrace here. The steamer got in Monday but I received no letters from her. She will sail on the first.

Friday we go up the river to try the market at S.C.

We can't sell here at wholesale at all. At Sacramento City we can tie the brig to the bank and retail out of here, and goods are higher there. If we can rent a lot reasonably we shall put up our house and trade in that. If not, we can sell it for a great price. I think we shall come out whole with the cargo, but no more. We have to pay a pilot from here up, a distance of 150 miles, $400! Captain Cole and I are living on board. We have the cabin all to ourselves. The cook stayed by. They are all going to leave the moment she is made fast at S.C. I don't blame them. Sailors are getting $200 per month to ship on the coast. The ship Greyhound is lying here offering $800 for men to take her home but can't get a man.

I wish I could send you a *lump*. I have seen some big pieces. The largest we have weighs 1½ oz, and that's nothing. I don't regret coming out at all and just as long as the gold mines last, business will be good.

The country is as quiet and peacable as you can expect where there is no government, no police, no society and where every man does what is right in his own eyes. Sunday is respected but there is no church and no parson. There are more females here than I expected to see. A great many brought their wives but none whom I know.

Write me every steamer. You don't know how I prize a letter in this far-off country.

P.S. *August 23rd.* In looking over your letter, I think it rather dry, hardly worth 40¢. By the way, that letter from Callao must have cost more than it would fetch if you ever got it. These steamers tuck it on but a dollar here is no more than a shillin in the States and you write as often and as much as you like and don't pay the postage again.

The two passengers that we took at Callao proved to be fine gentlemenly fellows, Peruvians, although one of

them came on board so drunk that we immediately put him to bed where he lay for three days and then came to himself and was all right until the glorious fourth, when he got rather patriotic. We celebrated the day with all the honors, fired the regular salutes, displayed the bunting and had, as far as we could see, the whole world to ourselves. And then, such a dinner: roast turkey and plum pudding! But perhaps one day you will have the pleasure of reading my journal. I made a full entry of the doings. Neither of these fellows could speak a word of English and one of them brought out his grammar and began to study. I thought it would be a capital chance to learn Spanish. I got my grammar and began. We taught each other and while I found it rather hard work to study at first, I persevered and learned a lesson every day. I had a good chance to practice, too, and by the time we arrived I could 'habla Espanola mucho.' I can translate it from a book with ease and converse quite fluently. There is plenty of it spoken here, although most of the people are Yankees, yet you meet in the streets people of all nations. Most of the foreignors are Chilenos, Peruvians and Mexicans and quite a sprinkling of the native Californians are seen wrapped in their gay-colored ponchos, with pants split open all the way down the side of the leg and buttoned up gaiter fashion. They make a great display, dashing through the streets on horseback. They are excellent riders and their saddles and stirrups would be a curiousity with you. I have ridden on one myself and it is like sitting in an arm chair compared to our hard things that we call saddles.

The death of J. K. Polk was received here by the steamer on Saturday. On Monday all the shipping displayed their flags at half-mast and the man of war fired minute guns.

I paid 50¢ for a Herald and gleaned all the news. The

cholera seems to be making a dreadful ravage among great men. Doesn't it kill any of the common people?

You speak of looking at my picture... It will give you a faint idea of me now. I have not put a razor to my face since leaving N.Y. It is not the fashion here, for it would cost a dollar. Dirty shirts are all the fashion as it would cost $12 per dozen to have them washed. Dust is very fashionable and common for the wind blows tremendously every day and kicks it up at a great rate. This is a great annoyance here and it is next to impossible to keep clean. The climate is cool and thick clothes are worn. The nights are foggy but I think it is healthy here. Up on the river people say it is sickly, very hot and plenty of mosquitoes. I have been at work hard since I arrived but enjoy good health.

You must excuse this scrawl for it is getting late and I can hardly see what I write. Captain Cole is spinning a long yarn to Sarah and I will drink your health in a glass of *Italie* and go to bed.

SACRAMENTO CITY, *October* 25, 1849

I have just finished writing to Father and Mother and refer to their letter for a brief description of the city and what we are doing in the way of business, with Capt. Cole and myself here and John Benson in San Francisco to buy goods, the Brig George Emery for a store house and our lot and store filled with goods, with just as much as we can attend to to wait on customers. I think we are in a fair way to make our pile and be ready to come home one of these years.

I had a happy time at sea and two months passed away without any change but two months here are equal to one year at home. We have arrived, sold most of our cargo, put it ashore ourselves, put up our store and the place has grown one half in size. You have no idea how

this country is going ahead. Last spring there was nobody here and now the people are as thick as in the city of New York. Stages run regularly to the mines; steamboats run on the river; a theatre, church and several large handsome hotels with billiard saloons and bowling alleys and all the fixings, have been put up. Even a couple of girls are around with a hand organ and tambourine. Civilization is making rapid strides. You may consider me squatted, settled, regularly enrolled as a citizen of this city. I like the climate situation and the people here first rate and I believe it is bound to *blaze*. This and San Francisco will be *the places* in California.

The city is laid out one mile square. The streets 80 feet wide, crossing each other at right angles. They have spared most of the noble white oaks that line the banks of the river so the streets are all set out with trees full grown. The streets are lettered up from the river: A, B, C, etc. and numbered parallel with it: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. We are on H Street, between 5th and 6th. Right below our store is one of the most busy scenes you ever saw. It is a large livery stable where they sell horses, mules, oxen and carts at auction. The auctioneer gets on the animal and rides him up and down the street, shows him off to the best advantage and frequently four or five are selling at once. Such a Babel of sounds! There is always a large crowd and some rare sport. You know I always liked riding on horseback and if I only had time I could have enough of it here. We bought a fine riding horse for $109 at auction, bought from the Snake Indians with saddle, bridle, spurs alone six inches long, all complete. Everyone rides on horseback as carriages are scarce.

Out of the town the country is one level prairie, a grand chance to ride. Don't I course it over the plain occasionally! Out about two miles stands Sutters Fort, quite a large establishment. Old Sutter himself lives on a ranch

up country. The old fellow must be immensely rich. At any rate he keeps drunk all the time.

I write this from the cabin of the George Emery. She will probably lay her bones here. I have slept on a board since the 23rd of January. We board at an eating house next door, above us and let one half the upper part of our store to the man and his wife and child for the low rent of $72 per month (what would a down East house come to?) We can rent our store 14 ft. by 28 ft. for $500 per month anytime. We pay $18 per week for board. The man who keeps the house (Lindley) is a young fellow, all the way from Conn. and with his wife and little girl came across the plains. His wife is much the better half, I guess; quite a lady and will be quite an addition to our establishment. A great many women came across the country with their husbands and it is no uncommon sight to see one in the streets. I believe Mrs. Lindley is the first American woman I have spoken with since I left Rio. I am getting to be perfectly savage and at the same time quite domestic, for until within a week we cooked on board and I washed up the dishes. Have washed my own clothes ever since I left N.Y. I don't use much starch. White shirts I have discarded. They get dirty too quickly and don't wash half as easily as red flannel or calico. Shaving is all humbug. Nobody shaves here and you can't find a better looking set of men. I am going to have my daguerreotype taken and sent home to show you how I have improved. Full dress here is a pair of buckskin pants, fringed, with a red silk sash, fancy shirt and frock of buckskin trimmed with bell buttons and broad brimmed felt hat and a revolver slung on one side and a Bowie knife on the other, with a pair of skins about a foot long. The horses are fine looking animals. The saddle I can't describe and here you have a picture of most of the miners. Although most everyone goes around with a revolver I have never seen one used but

once. In the crowd at the horse auction one man struck another over the head with the butt of a rifle. What for I never learnt. The man drew himself out of the crowd, took out his six shooter and commenced blazing away, right into the crowd of fifty men. One man was shot in the breast but not mortally. He fired three shots and stopped. Then, says he: 'I'll let you know I am a man of honor! By G——!' Nobody took any notice of it. There is no police here and the man went off.

Tomorrow I start for San Francisco on the steamer Sacramento and take down six thousand dollars in dust to send to R. B. B. It is something of a risk but I think there will be no trouble. I will finish this at S.F.

SAN FRANCISCO, *October 31st*, 1849

I arrived all safe on Saturday at this place. It has grown much larger since I have been up the river. There is a perfect forest of shipping in the harbor. All the canvass houses have disappeared and handsome frame and brick buildings have taken their places. Several new saloons have been opened equal to the Broadway saloons and eating houses. A circus and theatre have been opened and the streets are as much blocked up with carts and people as New York.

The weather is fine; much warmer than when we were here in August. People look much more dressed here than up the river: more cityfied. There is more society. Ladies are quite plentiful as you may judge from the fact that there are two large handsome ballrooms in full blast. The city contains now over 20,000 people. It is bound to be a large city. The trade from China is coming in here fast and from all over the Pacific.

Tell Father I had to finish his letter in a great hurry to get it into the bags that I sent the dust in to Uncle R. B. B. I had to get down to the office before twelve o'clock

with my bills of lading. There is an immense quantity of gold going in this steamer. Her yawl boat was loaded with boxes. I heard in Messrs. Symmons and Hutchinson's office that it would come up to $2,000,000. Don't stare! This country raises gold and they have not begun to dig it up yet. If you had seen the heavy valises that came down the river when I came you would think there was some here, if not more. I know of three men who are going 'home' with $150,000. There are some rich men here. Samuel Brannan, one of the proprietors of Sac. City and who owns the city hotel there, has an income from his rents alone of $160,000 a year, besides a store here and at the place. He is a young man who came out here three years ago. When mine amount to that I shall come home. I have sent you a small specimen of the native gold, also some to Father and Mother. You can have it manufactured into some article of jewelry (take it to some one who will not cheat you) and wear it in remembrance of the *gold fever*... that has brought me and so many thousands from home. Those are small pieces. I have seen one lump that weighed a pound and two ounces but the large ones are all bought up to send home and are getting scarce. Most of the gold is like the dust that I sent Father.

Politics begin to be agitated. A mass meeting was held the other evening in the square and a governor and a delegate to congress were nominated and will be elected soon. Next congress this will be made a *state*.

Captain Cole thinks of sending for his wife if he does not go home this winter after her.

SACRAMENTO CITY, *November* 25, 1849

I am in possession of a letter dated in August from you and also received one from Uncle Richard, dated Sept. 15th, but nothing from the rest of the family. I am glad

to know that you are all alive and well and hope you will continue so for some years, at least until I come home which I intend doing at some future time — when, the Lord only knows. I have not come 20,000 miles to turn around and go right back again like some persons who have been here and gotten homesick. I prophesy that they will be sick to come back here again when they hear of the prosperity of this great and growing country. I finished your letter from San Francisco, as you will see if you ever get it.

Shortly after, I returned to this place on the steamer 'Senator.' It really seemed like travelling again to sit on a sofa in her splendid saloon. If it had not been for the entire absence of ladies, the smoking in the saloon (this suited me, of course), and the *monte tables*, I could have imagined myself going down east from Boston. It was her first trip and she started the echoes for the first time on the Sacramento with a regular steamboat's bell and whistle. Great was the astonishment of the Indians as they stared at us from the bank.

Upon our arrival at Sacramento City we were greeted with the firing of cannon and the cheers of the inhabitants. She now runs regularly three times a week, through by day light, fare $25, meals $2. She must coin money.

Today is Sunday. Gloomy November, probably, with you, but here the weather is splendid, not cold enough to need a fire. Although this is the winter or rainy season it has rained about 15 days out of this month so far. When it rains it is gloomy enough and muddy enough, but as soon as it clears off the mud dries up mighty quickly.

The Sierra Nevada mountains look magnificent from here, covered with snow, but down in the valley snow seldom falls. People are planting gardens. The trees are evergreen and the grass so long parched up it is just springing up green again.

So much for the climate. I want to tell you about our domestic arrangements. We have fitted up the upper part of our store: clothed it with sheeting, carpeted it with Chinese mats, furnished it with chairs and tables and live in luxury for this country. The heaviest bill was for the cook-stove, $100 was the lowest cent we could get one for and a common one at that. Mrs. Lindley does the cooking and we furnish the material and eat it. The Captain lugs all the wood and water up stairs. We have a parlor and kitchen and begin to live like rational beings again. It costs us about $10 a week and you can't board at any place less than $20. In the evening we have a social game of whist and spend our time very agreeably. Lindley is a lawyer and his wife a New Haven girl and a lady in every sense of the word.

Captain Cole has sent the brig down to S.F. and if the rains stop the hauling to the mines and trade is dull, he may go to the Sandwich Islands with her. The rain does not stop the place from going ahead. Two large hotels are being erected and a city hospital. The city contains over 800 framed buildings, besides the tents. In the *election* last held, over 1800 votes were thrown. This will give you some idea of this 'right smart place.'

Trade has fallen off some since the rainy weather but week before last we sold out of our little store $1500 worth of goods. All cash trade in one day. Tell Joseph to beat that. We make a percentage here, too. The flour that I bought in San Francisco for $18 per sack (200 lbs) we sold for $44 and are all out. Flour is a little cheaper now. We sold at the top of the market and for once were *lucky*, for great quantities are arriving from Chile. It is now worth $35 here and $2 a lb in the mines. It costs 75¢ a pound to transport goods from here to the mines and our merchant from Weaver Creek, 50 miles from here, whose team we loaded, paid $1000 for having one load hauled. This is on account of the muddy roads.

So much for California. It has gotten to be an old story to me. The first dust that I received, $2800, on our selling two houses in San Francisco, made my eyes sparkle and my heart beat rather quickly as I spooned it into a two quart pail. But now, I receive it and weigh it out with as little feeling as I would so much sand.

I should like to be at home on Thanksgiving Day. I suppose you have had or will have one about this time. (Bake me a turnover!) Be sure and write me all about it. I look forward with great pleasure to spending a Thanksgiving with all the family once more in my life. We shall be different persons from what we were on the last we spent together, but our affections will remain the same. I know mine will. Talk to me about a man's forgetting old times and losing his interest in his home and friends — it is all humbug. The farther I am removed from you and the longer I stay, mine increases. My remembrances of home and my youth are dear to me. We were blest, Mary, with the best of parents and a happy home. Probably they were the happiest years of our lives — those that we spent at home. How much wiser a person gets to be by going abroad and mixing with the ups and downs of this world — in these truths which he never can realize until he leaves home.

SACRAMENTO CITY, *February* 12, 1850

Let me, in the first place, acknowledge the receipt of my letters from you and from home. Now let me give you some advice. Direct your letters to me personally at Sacramento City as the mail is brought up from San Francisco twice a week. Never send by private hand — not if your own husband was the person. We have had enough experience in that line here. The person always dies on the way, goes to the mines or to the devil. Capt.

Cole or myself will remain here all the time, so you write by mail and direct to this place for the present.

I read your letters with great interest and consider myself posted up on events from down East, to the latest dates. I feel for poor Tim Smith, but was not at all surprised at what you wrote. It's clear he is a goner and I shall write to him by this steamer to start immediately for Cal. — where he can go to ruin in less than half the time he can in New York, or reform and take his place in the first society, no matter what his character was in the states.

During the rainy season business has been very dull. As all the roads to the mines are impassable all the transportation has been by water.

I have learned a great deal about the country — one thing in particular — that the valley of the Sacramento was originally and is now during the greater part of the rainy season, a part of the Pacific Ocean. You have probably heard ere this of the flood at this place — almost equal to the one in which Noah figured. It only shows that the people of the States know no more about this country than they do about the interior of Japan. I have ceased to wonder and am open to conviction. We were told by some of the old residents that the site of this city was liable to be overflowed, but as the Sacramento was then fifteen feet below the top of the bank and the country dry, we laughed at the idea every one. But we have had to acknowledge the corn.

About the 10th of January we had warm weather that melted the snow on the mountains, followed by a heavy south east rain storm. The water in the river was nearly to the top of the bank at the time. At 12 o'clock (noon) it boiled over the bank of the American Fork and came down on the city. The bank of the Sacramento is higher than the country back. That night the Sacramento

J STREET, SACRAMENTO, ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1853

flowed over also and about dark the water was up to the floor of our store.

We piled the dry barrels upon the wet ones and on the counter and took part of our stock up stairs. At 9 o'clock the water was over the counter.

Boats were taking people out of one story buildings. A large adobe bakery close to us fell in with a tremendous crash. The water kept rising and things began to look serious. We had no boat and began to calculate how long it would be before we should float. Mrs. Lindley began to be alarmed and we took a strong brandy sling all around and sat down.

About 12 o'clock it stopped rising. The next morning there were three feet ten inches in our store and five feet in the street in front. We got into a whale boat and went down to the shipping. There were about 25 vessels lying at the bank. They were crowded with sick people and women and children.

The scene in the city was curious. It was a second Venice. A great quantity of merchandise floated off and was either stolen or lost. We lost over $500 worth of rice, besides dried fruits and other things damaged, though most of our goods we had taken upstairs.

We lived just as comfortably as before. Rigged a side ladder out of the chamber window, built a flat boat and paddled over the country extensively. Instead of the people wearing long faces as you would suppose, the city never was more lively. The streets were filled with boats and everybody was for having a frolic.

Captain Cole and myself took a whaleboat and took our lady and five young ladies from the Brig Toronto and took them out to the Fort to call on the McClellan girls who reside there. The fort is on high land and was dry, but from thereto the shipping was all plain sailing.

The prairie where I used to ride last summer as far as

you see, was covered with water. All the cattle on the plains were drowned. It was a hard sight to see them swimming about or lying dead in heaps on some little hill. There must be an immense quantity of them lost.

I staid in the city a week and took a small stock of goods and a canvas house, some lumber and provisions and started on the steamer Linda for the Yerba.

The towns of Vernon and Fremont at the mouth of Feather River were in the same situation as the city but it did not last so long at this point. Where I passed up from the Sierra Nevada to the coast range, was one vast lake. This is the *beautiful* and *fertile* valley of the Sacramento about which so much has been said and written.

As you ascend Feather River, the banks grow higher and twenty miles from the mouth at Captain Sutter's town, it is really a fine country. Captain Sutter has here a fine house and out buildings, and a large farm under cultivation. He resides here having sold his Fort at Sac. City.

Forty five miles from the mouth of Feather River the Yuba comes in. Here is a new city started on the site of an old Indian Rancheria, called Yuba City. I went on shore and liked the situation very much. There are about twenty stores and houses built and more going up.

Shakespeare says 'What's in a name?', but I concluded partly on account of the name to go on up the Yuba to the head of steamboat navigation to Covilland's new city, which he has called after his young wife, 'Marysville.' I found it going ahead of its rival, Yuba City, and a better place for trade and nearer to the mines on both rivers. Here I put up my store, bought a lot of land for $250 and went to trading. There is no overflow here and it is beautifully situated on the banks of the Yuba. It was formerly Nye's Ranch and was purchased by Covilland and Foster for $52,000. They have laid out a city one

MARYSVILLE: VIEW FROM THE NORTH SIDE OF THE PLAZA

mile square and here is where you will see the go-aheaditiveness of the Yankee nation. In one fortnight's time they sold $25,000 worth of lots at $250 each. In ten days, while I was there, 17 houses and stores were put up and what was before this a ranch, viz: a collection of Indian huts and a corral for cattle, became a right smart little city.

Marysville (I like the name) is 80 miles above Sacramento City and eight miles from the mountains. It is colder here, the mountains being covered with snow but it never froze while I was there.

Two steamboats run regularly to Sacramento City. Freight is eight cents per lb and passage $20; meals $1.50, and sleep on deck or wherever you can get a chance.

Although the name is feminine and would imply a quiet sort of a place yet I regret to say that it contains the hardest set of 'hombres' it has been my fortune to live among in this country. Every night gambling, drinking, fighting and shooting are carried on to a great extent.

I saw two fellows who had come down from the mines with some dust spend, in one evening, all their money and then get into a row. One got knocked into a ditch and had his leg broken. The other had his head broken. They rather thought that they got their money's worth.

There was a gang of men on the ranch who had been killing cattle and sending the beef down to Sacramento City by the boat load. They told Covilland that all the cattle running at large belonged to the public and they should shoot all they pleased, and if he (as he threatened to do) tried to take them he must send one hundred men, armed with rifles, and Yankees not Indians. Judge Wilson of Sacramento City being in the place appointed a Sheriff and made out the necessary documents to take them. Covilland then offered to furnish with a horse and

arms any man who would volunteer to go out with him and the Sheriff to take them.

You know my love of adventure too well to think I let this chance slip. I buckled on my armor and vaulted into the saddle. He soon raised fifteen able-bodied men, all armed with rifles and revolvers, and we set out.

We rode over the ranch all day in search of them. This farm contains 15,000 acres, lying between the Feather and Yuba Rivers and has 1000 head of horses, and mules and cattle without number. They are all branded with a hot iron, every ranch having its private mark. We saw some splendid droves of horses, never broken, so perfectly wild. It's a beautiful country to ride in — open prairie and the banks of the streams timbered with oak and cotton wood. Covilland offered me a farm of 640 acres and I could pick it where I chose, for $1,000. I think I shall take him up.

We rode 20 miles from home and on the banks of a small stream we came upon a collection of tents and found one of the gang 'Armstrong.' The Sheriff told him he was our prisoner but he said he would not go except by force, and started for his tent. On looking around and seeing several rifles pointed at him he concluded to cave in and come along. In his wagon was found a quarter of beef with Covilland's brand on it.

We rode to another ranch about three miles and got there at dark. Here Covilland put the whole party through, at his expense. We had a fine supper — were *some hungry*, I reckon. It was a fine moonlight evening and with our prisoner on a led horse we rode home in triumph. It was romantic and I could imagine myself back in the times of Scott's novels.

We got home about nine o'clock, after riding 40 miles. I shall never tire of riding on horseback. There is a charm in it for me. and these California horses are so

different from ours. They either walk or run and the motion is like that of a cradle. How many of our horses do you suppose would stand it to run ten miles and keep their wind, as ours did that day?

The next day a Grand Jury was formed to indite them according to law and your humble servant had the honour of being one of the twelve wise men summoned to deliberate on this momentous question: whether law and order or anarchy and confusion shall exist in this country.

We assembled at the Foster House and were fastened into a room by the Sheriff. We lit our cigars and sat down to hear the charge of the Judge, examined the witnesses, summed up the evidence and found a True Bill against six...bound over the prisoner to appear and went to dine.

At the Foster House where I boarded were quite a number of ladies: Mrs. Towers, whose husband is landlord, Mrs. Foster, Mrs. Covilland and Mrs. Haight. Mrs. C. and Mrs. F. are two of the party who came over the mountains in 1846 and came so near starving. You recollect the horrid sufferings they endured, even to *eating each other*. They are the elite of the place, of course. Mrs. Covilland is quite young and pretty but there is not the least refinement or taste about them. The fact is that there is no woman who can come to this country at present and have any refinement. Their finer feelings, if they have any, will soon get blunted with the life they must live here.

Christmas evening a subscription ball was given at the City Hotel (at Sacramento City). There were about 40 ladies to 100 men and such ladies! Or rather, such Hoosiers, as some of them were! What do you think of a lady taking a child 4 weeks old to a ball and having her husband hold it while she takes a trot with some of the

hosts? There had to be a room appropriated for the mothers to nurse their children in.

This does not apply, however, to all the ladies present. Doctor White's daughters and the three McClellans were dressed in good taste and are pretty girls anywhere.

You seem very anxious about my getting married. Well, I will put your mind at rest on this subject. I intend to stay here until I make some money and stay single, and then I am going down to Lima and marry one of those beautiful dark-eyed senoritas and bring her to Bucksport! What do you think of my plan? And how would you like one for a sister? I think there are some advantages in it. They are easily wooed and won and love with all their hearts when they do love. So now you know all the information I know or can give you on this subject.

Well, I have given you a dose this time. I can't write anything on one sheet of paper and as I have nothing to do today (did my washing all up yesterday) I concluded I would write until I ran out.

I got back from Marysville last Saturday and found the city dry once more. The rainy season is about over and the weather is pleasant. We are going to build a new store here right off. Sold my goods and store at M. but retained the lot of land. It has doubled in value since I bought it. Sacramento City is after all *the* city. Property has not fallen in value one cent since the flood. No buildings were carried away and an immense quantity are going up this Spring. The prospect for trade is good. Merchandise of all kinds is low now.

I see there is a large emigration on the way from Maine. I expected it. Any man who will stay in that country and work a farm, when the same labor will give him here an ounce a day must be foolish. Or, if he wants a farm, here is land enough and I believe would produce. At any rate

they are making farms all around here. These men are called squatters and deny the claim of Captain Sutter and vote themselves a farm. Lindley and his wife are going up on Feather River to settle a farm.

We had a rarity for dinner yesterday. I should like to send you a piece — a steak off a grizzly bear. It was the finest meal I have ever eaten, so tender and juicy. The bear was killed 60 miles above, on the river and was as large as a cow. They are not as hard to kill as you and I had read. This fellow was killed with three shots. The meat sold readily for 75¢ per lb.

I have been perfectly healthy this winter — weigh 175 lbs, can sleep on the ground wrapped in a blanket and live on the tail of a mackerel and one hard bread a day and grow fat. But I haven't lived as hard as that long at a time.

SACRAMENTO CITY, *May* 28, 1850

Since I last wrote you, last month, the country has greatly improved. The weather is delightful, the roads superb. Riding out is all the rage. We have bought a splendid horse brought up from Monterey. He just takes the road now, I can tell you, and such a beautiful gait as he has! He lopes off for an hour, just as easy as a cradle. I went out riding with a lady for the first time the other day — a Mrs. Stevens from Kentucky. She came over the plains last season and her husband died last winter. She is young and pretty and all ready to form another co-partnership, but 'beware of the Vidders Samuel'! She is perfectly at home on horseback, so rides beautifully. We rode out about ten miles into the country and such a country as we have to ride in! It can't be beat. The road from here to Mormon Island follows the bank of the American Fork 25 miles over a smooth rolling prairie interspersed with groves of oak and covered in some part

with most splendid wild flowers. Every two or three miles are Public Houses where families have settled down. Sundays these houses are crowded with people from the city and horse flesh has to suffer some. The ladies ride out here a great deal. I admire seeing a lady riding on horseback when she is not afraid. I wish I could take you out on our horse for I believe you would make a fearless rider.

Cole has bought half of Lindley's Ranch. They have a Public House and had stock. It is a pretty place, seven miles from Marysville and a good speculation. We are going into the lumber business for the present here have a good yard and ten cargoes to sell.

Sewell sold his ticket and came upon a sailing vessel, 48 days passage. He is very well contented and is earning eight dollars per day. I received a cravat and some books. Please accept my thanks, whoever sent them.

Capt. Ginn is at work for us. He has gotten pretty well sobered. He lost his trunk and got here without a dime and no clothes except those he had on. If he will stop drinking he can do well. He says he shall drink no more... 'quien sabe?'

The fashionable season has commenced in Bucksport I suppose. Write me all the items for anything from there interests me. I like this country so well that it is doubtful whether I come to the States again, except to make a visit. I want to live on a ranch and own about 5000 acres of land and a thousand head of cattle and horses. That is the kind of a farm for me. I should live perfectly contentedly if I could spend half of my time on horseback, scouring over the prairies free as air. I am tired of trade, of trying to sell a man an article when he doesn't want it and I think I shall get out of it this Fall. It is the best business a man can follow, too. If you had to pay the prices we do for vegetables and milk, you would think so.

There are plenty of gardens here and they do well. We have green peas, lettuce, turnips, etc., and splendid salmon and if we only had a cook we could live well. There are seven of us living in our store. They pay $15 per week and help cook. Hadn't you better come out and keep boarders? You may have the upper part of our store.

SACRAMENTO CITY, *June* 27, 1850

Another moon has come around and brought this time a letter from you. We have a regular mail every day from San Francisco now and I got your letter yesterday and one from Father. I have heard from Sewall since I wrote Father. He and Herod have gone on to Deer Creek and are cutting hay on shares for Lindley. Hay is worth now eight cents per lb and when the emigration from over the plains comes in it will be higher. I have no doubt they will do better than at digging. Herod is perfectly steady and in good health. Sewall's constitution seems to be very much affected by the climate. He wants to sleep about eighteen hours out of the twenty four. Says he 'does not intend to write home for some years.' I refer you to Father's letter for business affairs.

As to amusements, I have but little to tell. Although we have two theatres, negro minstrels, sparring exhibitions by Yankee Sullivan and others, and occasionally a monte bank is bust by way of variety, yet I do not mix up in them.

There are a great many Eastern Captains here now and we have quite a society of down-easters. I think the folks from Maine do not make such good settlers for a new country as the Western Hoosiers. They are all the time grouching, thinking that they cannot make their fortune in a month and as most of them brought lumber here they have got most confoundedly stuck on it and are going to lose money instead of making it.

Our city has improved very much since last month. Two new gambling saloons have been opened. One of them 'See's Exchange' will rival anything in New York. It is one hundred and twenty feet long by forty wide and fifteen high, lighted by splendid chandeliers and the walls hung with fine paintings. It contains an orchestra with a good band, two bars, sixteen monte tables, two roulette, two faro banks and several other games. The Empire is nearly as large and fitted up, if anything, with more magnificence. These saloons are crowded every evening and the music is really good. Over the Exchange is a grand Hall for dancing... the whole size of the building, and is to be dedicated on the fourth of July by a grand ball. There is to be another at the new Hotel at Brighton, five miles out, on the American Fork. I expect the *glorious fourth* will be celebrated here with all the honors.

I wish when you write to your dear brothers you would write to us separately. Your letter was wet on the passage and somewhat faded and what you wrote about Miss Alice Merrill I can't make out — whether it was my picture and me you want to make a match out of, or Sewalls. However, from what you wrote about her I am half in love with her already. Give her a kiss for me (I wish I was there to do it) and say I am coming home on a visit one of these years and will claim it with interest.

Moreover, when you write again tell me if you get any papers from me. I send them every steamer and our papers out here now have gotten to be quite respectable. We have two dailies in this city.

I am sorry that Mother feels uneasy about my drinking. She has no cause, tell her, to fear of my ever being attached to it. I think too much of my health and good constitution to ruin it by pouring poison down my throat. In this climate especially, a person cannot drink to excess without being sick, besides I have never acquired a love

for it and I have been in the midst of it every since I left home. In this city everyone drinks, some more and some less. It is considered no disgrace to drink but it *is to get drunk*. I drink very little and that claret or port wine. I have no taste for it and never shall have. My Mother did just right to bring me up on cold water. I drink it with my meals instead of coffee, yet, and prefer it to anything else. I enjoy first-rate health and although I have had the fever and ague and dysentery in this country, yet I have never employed a doctor. My system yields to the simplest remedies and my appetite on veal cutlets and beef steaks is really awful to behold.

I don't think of anything to say, more, at this time. I expect you to write every month, no matter whether you have anything to say or not. Sit down and think of something. Your letters are always interesting and your excuses about not being a good letter-writer are getting stale.

SACRAMENTO CITY, *April* 25, 1850

We have built a new store, one of the handsomest in Sacramento City: twenty feet wide by fifty eight long, two stories with an elegant front and balcony. The upper part will make a fine residence.

Lindley has taken up a farm on the Yuba. He sent for his wife and Captain Cole went up with her last week. So I am all alone. Just got through supper. Confounded hot work this cooking. A real bore, isn't it? If you don't send out that servant girl I'll get married and have somebody to keep house.

The great excitement here now is the grand soiree to come off tomorrow night at the opening of the new theatre. White vests have gone up and kids are in great demand. One of the committee told me that they had issued invitations to *one hundred ladies*. So you see the

sex are not so few and far between here as you might suppose. I have no doubt by fall they will glut the market, as is the case with lumber. The theatre is a very handsome one with parquet and boxes and larger than the Olympic at New York. 'Mary Taylor' is engaged and will soon be here to play. Why, we had three concerts last week from 'Hertz.' I can't keep up with this country. It goes ahead of me.

The Panama arrived Monday and I have been reading the speech of D. Webster. We have papers to March 15th. I should think there was quite an excitement in Congress but it's no use for the South to try to crowd slavery into this country. There are too many Northern people here for this ever to become a slaveholding state. Liberty in its largest sense reigns here.

The summer or dry season has fairly commenced. The river is still very high. Everything is in full bloom. The prairie is covered with flowers. It has been decided to levee the city and the mayor has issued his proclamation to raise $250,000 to do it with. So we need not fear another flood. Trade is good already although the roads are not good yet. But everything looks promising for a busy season.

Tell Mother I shall look out for Sewall. We do not want him in the store now as we can attend to it ourselves but I will put him in the way of doing something.

SAN FRANCISCO, *December* 1, 1850

I am entirely out of business for the first time here. I have been settling up all last month and got through Friday.

I have not seen Captain Phillips but I think of going a voyage with him in the Schooner Columbia. I want to do something until next Spring, enough to make my expenses and then I think of giving the mines a fair trial for

six months. I believe there is just as good a chance to make money in the mines now and for another year to come, as ever has been in times past, whereas trade is very uncertain. Mining is a sure thing. You get your pay in gold every night. It is a hard life but I can stand it for one year at least. Sewall has dug this season from $1000 to $1500 and in running around and in various ways has spent it all. He has been at work in a poor place, not averaging over five dollars per day the greater part of the time. I hope he will do better this winter. We have all come to the conclusion to go to mining next summer but the 'white man is very uncertain,' you know, and by next spring we may conclude to go into something else.

I think very favorably of farming and have bought five hens of Kirk, brought out by Stover. With these and the horses and cattle that we have at the ranch, I could make a start and, I have no doubt, make money. I will inform you if I go a voyage. I hope to go either to the Sandwich or Society Islands after vegetables and hogs. This would be a delightful excursion. Only think of revelling amid those orange groves in January!

ON BOARD SCHOONER COLUMBIA
March 10, 1851
Latt 7° 35′ *South Lon* 145° *West*

I thought I would take this opportunity of giving you some of the particulars of my voyage as I have plenty of leisure time on my hands just now, and when I arrive (if I ever do) in San Francisco I shall probably be busy.

We sailed from San Francisco on the 23rd of December. In three days we were off Santa Barbara. We pulled in with the boat for the Captain's brother, who had been left there sick some months before. We ascertained that he had left for San Francisco three days previous. This

is an old Spanish town of some forty or fifty houses and has not changed like the rest of the country. It is a very quiet, pretty little place. We stopped about four hours and then pulled about the bay six hours trying to find the schooner in the dark. We finally found her and stood out to sea.

In seventeen days from the coast we made Hood's Island and the same afternoon anchored in one of the bays in the island of Wooahooya, one of the Marquesas group. The first view of these islands disappointed me. They looked barren. The interior rises in lofty mountains with spurs running to the shore, terminating in bold headlands. These form the valleys, where the inhabitants reside, and the bays. The mountains are covered with grass and the valleys are filled with cocoanut, banana and breadfruit trees with brooks running by them. The natives reside altogether in these valleys.

Hardly was our anchor down before the natives began to gather on the shore and put off, the men in canoes and the women (who are not allowed to get into a canoe, all over the group on account of the taboo) swimming. I may as well mention here that we had on board a fellow by the name of Daniel Marsh who had resided in this bay and in the island of Nukehua eight years. He had his wife and a girl from Nukehua and we had as passengers two other native girls belonging to Nukehua, who came to California in the ship Nile. They had had enough of California and were glad to get back to eat Poe Poe and swim in the surf once more. They dressed like the whites and were pretty well civilized. Dan spoke the language like a native and was to trade for us.

We allowed the natives to come on board as Dan knew most of them. We soon had the deck covered with them. They behaved themselves very well. I was struck by their fine forms and particularly at finding them so white.

Some of the girls were as white as you are. The men are tattooed all over, like a wall painted in fresco. Some of them were almost lead color and entirely naked except for a 'humi' or piece of Tappa around the loins. The females wore a piece of Tappa coming down to the knees and had wreaths around their heads. They are not tattooed.

It was an amusing sight to see them — swimming around the vessel, crawling up on the bobstays and hanging on to the davy falls astern, laughing, chattering and spattering each other, and joking with those on board. They do their piece of Tappa up in a small bundle and hold it up out of water with one hand, to keep it dry. But they always put it on before they come over the side of the vessel. They have a feeling of modesty even though their dress is scanty.

As Captain Phillips and I sat aft, eating our bananas and enjoying the novelty of the scene, he remarked that he should like to haul into Deacon Darling's wharf with all of them on board!

Toward night the wind began to blow fresh and we thought it safer to haul her in under the land. The anchor was hove short and a line run. The kanakas took hold and when the anchor was lifted the line parted and before the anchor brought her up we were close in to the breakers. The wind blew a perfect gale and with both anchors she kept dragging toward the shore. We now ran the large hawser to the opposite shore. It took an hour to do this and all the time we were thumping on the rocks. There were only six feet of water astern.

As we were all busy the kanakas amused themselves by stealing all the light articles lying around loose. They stole my blankets and all the traps out of the long boat belonging to the hatch-bar crew. They are most expert thieves and will steal a thing before your face and jump

overboard before you can lay your hand on them. I will give them the credit, however, of helping haul the vessel off. Finally the hawser was made fast and by heaving on the anchor and all the kanakas hauling on the wharf, we got into deep water again and I felt as though a mountain had been taken off of me. I breathed easily again for this grinding on the coral rocks with fifty of these natives on board, grunting with satisfaction every time she struck, is not very pleasant.

We got very little trade here and sailed for Dominique, an island about sixty miles to windward. The chiefs are very fond of visiting around the group so we carried over five of the natives. One of them was the King of the bay, old 'Tukerwahoo.' He was a comical genius and made a great deal of sport for us. We clothed him up and the Captain gave him a beaver hat with a red band. This he only wore on going ashore. He was the best swimmer I have ever seen. In filling the water we upset the boat. In the surf the Captain's pistols and two muskets were lost overboard. The old fellow went down in the breakers and the first dive he brought both pistols. The next time, one musket — though the other he could not find. But they eat up all the provisions on board. You never would call me a large eater if you could have two or three of these chiefs to dinner — and liquors don't come amiss.

At one bay in Dominique we got 100 hogs, 100 squashes, 200 cocoanuts and 10 bbls of sweet potatoes, at the rate of five hogs for one keg of powder, three for one musket, one for a hatchet, etc.

Here we found the owner of the Schooner 'Sam Fox,' Mr. Frazer from California. He had loaded his schooner and sent her to San Francisco and landed enough powder and muskets to load her again, but the temptation was too strong for the kanakas and they and a rascal of a white man, who was his trader, were robbing him of all

his stuff. He hired us to take his goods and himself over to Wooahooya to a bay where three white men lived. We did so. Mr. Frazer remained with us and is now on board and on his way to San Francisco.

We visited the islands of Wooahooya, Dominique, Woopo and Nukehua. At Woopo we remained five days. Mr. Frazer and myself stopped on shore at the house of a chief. There was a Catholic priest here. He had converted one family.

As our doings at one place were the same at all the others, I will describe this. Besides, these were the best people I met and the largest village and the prettiest girls and they raise more potatoes than the others. They are the finest potatoes I have ever seen.

We took the powder and muskets, cloth, knives, etc., ashore under the cocoanut trees near the beach and the natives brought their potatoes down in baskets made of cocoanut leaf and we bought them at the rate of 10 bbls for a keg of powder, five for a musket; giving four fathoms of cloth for a bbl or three knives and 24 flints, and one man wanted some paper to make cartridges so I gave him a novel for a bbl. We also got 30 bbls for an old boat.

All the inhabitants, except the men digging, were assembled on the beach having a holiday. The girls were dressed out in their best robes of tappa with wreaths of flowers in their glossy black hair and large bunches of poseys stuck through a hole in their ears. They were seated round in circles singing and beating time with two sticks. This they call 'Hoolah Hoolah.' It is a kind of monotonous chant. They also have a passion for 'titaboos' (Jewsharps) and play this instrument very well. Some dozen men were having a 'Hoolah Hoolah' and accompanied their singing with three drums, making a terrible noise. The piccaninnies were amusing themselves playing in the surf. The missionary girls, dressed in loose

gowns, kept away from the heathen as the Padre did not allow them to sing anything except hymns.

We had no rows nor confusion. Every man had his own pile and they gave good measure and were all satisfied with their bargains. When they got a keg of powder in their arms, they would dance for joy. The cloth all went to the ladies. I had rather trade with them than with the Western Hoosiers. They are more civilized and know more in every way.

At night we walked up to the village about half a mile from the beach. Here our worthy host had a sumptuous supper prepared for us: roast pig, roast breadfruit mashed up and eaten with cocoanut milk, very much like pudding and milk, fish roasted in leaves, sweet potatoes, bananas, etc. Everything was clean. The house was built of bamboos thatched with leaves and is paved with smooth stone and well furnished with mats, rolls of tappa, trays, etc. For candles they use a nut like a filbert strung on a stick. They are so full of oil that they burn well. Here four men and their wives lived, besides any quantity of hogs and pigs occasionally getting in. The wife of the master of the house and her sister were two of the finest looking women I saw on the islands. They were named 'Tiheah' and 'Teikah.'

They treated us with the utmost hospitality and in return we gave the men each a musket and the ladies, calico, beads and Jewsharps. We lay here five days and bought 200 bbls of potatoes. Our friends parted with a great deal of regret. Carboutoo, one of our passengers, found some of her friends here and took her traps ashore and stopped. We paid the King five fathoms of cloth for anchoring in his water, as he called the bay.

From here we went to Nukehua, the largest island of the group. The French have a settlement at one bay. We anchored in Typee Bay. Perhaps you have read

Melville's work 'Typee.' This was the same bay that he lived in. Some of the white men living here recollect him. I inquired of the natives through Dan for 'Fayaway' but could not hear of her.

The scenery there was beautiful. There is one large bay and four small ones opening into it. Here we had the same crowd of natives swimming off to the schooner and the same entertainments on shore, only that the natives were more numerous and more inclined to cheat. Here we got 100 bbls of potatoes, fowls and cocoanuts, etc. Dan and his wife and Typu left us here as they were at home.

We got under way and stood for Tahiti. We were twenty five days among this group. I can hardly realize that the natives are the bloodthirsty savages they are represented to be. They are not cannibals and they appear to be kind and good-natured, never quarrelling among themselves. Although I always went armed I felt perfectly secure with them. They will never harm you if you do not give them cause. They put perfect confidence in the whites and sometimes they have been cheated. Their girls have been kidnapped and carried off. They have some honor and know when a man tells them a lie! We always kept our word to them and the exception of their stealing a few articles they treated us well.

On our way to Tahiti we stopped at the little island of Metia and got some fowls, cocoanuts, etc. On the morning of the fifth day we were in sight of the island. The lofty peak of Oroohuna rises to the heighth of 8500 feet and can be seen a great distance.

I had read and heard so much about Tahiti that my anticipations were pitched pretty high but I was not disappointed. On the contrary, the beauty of the scenery far exceeded my fancy. The island is enclosed in a coral reef, which is marked by a line of white foam. Inside it

it is as smooth as a lake. This reef, as Wise beautifully describes it is: 'No ungainly ledge of black jagged rocks but a smooth parapet of coral just beneath the surface with the outer face like a bulwark of adamant, where the swelling billows vainly expend their rage and then bubble rippling over in a liquid fringe of creamy foam.' You can read better descriptions from Wilkes and especially from Wise's narative called 'Los Gringos,' than I can give you, so I will not attempt it.

March 11, 1851. *Latt* 5° 23′ *S. Long* 145° *W.*

I saw the diadem of Fatooar, a mountain with its top resembling a crown. At twelve o'clock we were off the town of Papeetee. We were soon boarded by the pilot and with a fresh breeze the schooner was pointed for the opening in the reef. Borne on the summit of a tremendous roller, we leapt, as it were, the barrier and came down in a basin as smooth as a pond. The shore of the harbor is in the shape of a horseshoe and the natural breakwater outside makes it a fine harbor. Here we found three whalers and several other vessels; one was the 'Jane A. Hersey' from Bangor, loading for California. I went on shore with the pilot and Mr. Frazer and myself hired a house, all furnished, for ten dollars per month, and took our meals at the American Hotel kept by a Vermonter.

Our next call was on the American Consul, Mr. Gray of Boston. The Captain and myself took tea at his house during our stay. His wife is from Fryburg, Maine. He lives in first-rate style.

We took a stroll through the town which contains probably over one hundred houses and returned to the Hotel at eight to supper, with the idea that Papeetee was the loveliest spot we had ever seen. The very forests of Tahiti are composed of fruit trees, entirely, such as the breadfruit, banana, orange, cocoanut, guava, lime, apple,

etc. When such a climate and such a soil are brought under cultivation and laid out in gardens and these trees and flowers are trained by the hand of man and woman, you can imagine what a Paradise can be made.

The cottages of the foreigners are completely hidden in this beautiful foliage. Doctor Johnson has the most splendid garden I have ever seen. I thought if Mother could have such an assortment of flowers she would be perfectly satisfied.

At one end of the town are the barracks and residences of the French officers and a large public square. On this is the governor's palace and the palace of her majesty, Queen Pomari. There are 500 French soldiers stationed here. The French pretend to protect the government of the queen and as far as the governing of the natives goes, the queen and her chiefs have the sway, but regarding foreigners the French have all the say. They have built her a fine house and give her $5000 a year but the French are generally detested by the natives and by all the foreigners. Sentinels are stationed at every corner and at eight o'clock the gun fires and all are obliged to 'vamos.' Anyone caught in the streets is liable to be taken to the calaboose. You must get a permit to stop on shore and give forty-eight hours notice when you want to leave and a thousand other petty and foolish regulations which are not known in our free and enlightened country. Hurrah!

Now to resume the thread of my yarn. On Sunday I attended the native church. It is as large as our old meeting house was at home and well filled. The men wear a Pareu, or strip of calico which comes down to the ankles and over that a shirt. Some of the young dandies however, sport pants and coats and patent leather boots. The women wear a loose dress and some of them go into shoes and bonnets, but only on Sundays. They have the same fondness for flowers as those at the Marquesas and

dress their hair with great taste. Nearly all of them were provided with Bibles and hymn books in their native tongue and paid good attention to the minister. The singing was principally done by the women. After two or three verses I recognized the tune to be 'The hill of Zion yields, etc.' Their style is a little different from yours but some of them have good voices and the girls sing all the popular negro songs.

In the evenings the band performed in front of the governor's house and the grounds were filled with people. This is the time to see the beauty and fashion of Tahiti. They all turn out in their best clothes. Some of the ladies were dressed elegantly in satin and white muslin and I think their loose dresses are highly becoming, Wilkes to the contrary. Also their pretty Panama hats with a wreath of flowers look much better than a bonnet. They are barefooted to be sure, but then, where all go so you soon get used to it. The natives are darker than the Marquesans and generally not as handsome, although I saw some that would be called beautiful anywhere.

A great many foreigners have married natives. Captain Salmon of the 'Jane A. Hersey' is married to a sister of Queen Pomari. I saw her royal highness at Mr. Gray's store. She is about forty and still a fine looking woman. She has become pious of late and instead of spreeing around the island as she used to, she stays at home and speculates in oranges. She was dressed like any other woman and barefooted but the natives paid her a great deal of respect.

One afternoon in company with several friends, I rode out to the country house of Pomari, about four miles from Papeetee on the beach. There is a good road called the broom road which goes around the island, and plenty of horses. The country is pretty thickly settled and orange trees are as plentiful as firs at home. At this sea-

son they are filled with fruit and the perfume fills the air. The house is situated right on the beach and is 100 feet by 30 and the finest bamboo house I have ever seen. The Queen was not there but a large family appears to reside in the house. They invited us in and as two of our party were acquainted we were at once made perfectly welcome and at home. By and by dinner was announced. It was served up in the Tahitian style: a leaf of banana was spread on the floor, or rather on the mats; on one side were six green cocoanuts with the tops knocked off and before each person a cocoanut shell filled with sop made of salt water and milk to eat the breadfruit in. We also had roast chicken and fish very much like sardines, with a dessert of fruit. We all pronounced the dinner 'maiu' (good) and after amusing ourselves watching the Vahines ride astride on horseback, we returned to town.

The last day of our stay a tremendous crowd of natives arrived from all parts of the island and also from the other islands: Ainieo, Mangia, etc., to attend the examinations of the schools. This is held here and in the presence of the governor, queen and chiefs. They also take advantage of this to have a grand Hoolah Hoolah, or native dance. I was astonished to witness this as I supposed the missionaries had long since done away with all their old heathen customs. But the whole population turned out to witness the performance and the native constables with Mutoi (police) on their hats, kept the crowd in good order.

A mat was spread on the ground and twenty five men dressed in white with yellow flowers in their hats, ranged themselves in a line. The music was supplied by four men playing on reed pipes, four on drums and six boys blowing through their hands. The men stood or sat still and jerked their bodies and arms into all manner of motions, keeping exact time and all making the same motions at once.

They must have drilled some. In front of this line the women performed. They began at one end of the line and danced toward each other, chasing forward and back, wriggling and twisting themselves equal to the India rubber man. I never shall forget one woman in a red dress. Madame Monplaisir would be nowhere in comparison to her. She and an old man danced a kind of minuet which ended in each trying to push the other off the mat, which excited roars of laughter.

They began at noon and kept it up until dark, getting more and more excited and they told me it would last four or five days. I am sorry to say that in the evening a great many of the dancers were intoxicated. This part of it belongs to civilization.

They have a salutation here — when you meet a native he says 'Your honor.' Where this came from I can't find out. They use it toward each other but it is not the native language.

We lay here twelve days and sold most of our hogs and the remnant of our trade and bought 46,400 oranges, 2000 limes, 1500 cocoanuts, bananas, pumpkins, wood water, etc. Oranges cost $5 per thousand. I made a great many acquaintances here and spent my time very agreeably, as you may well suppose. I know of no place where a person with a small sum of money could live and enjoy so much of life as here. Everything is cheap. In fact it grows spontaneously. You have only to pick it from the trees. Of course everybody is lazy. What little work there is done the natives do. They work well, too. I have made up my mind to go into the mines this summer and try my luck. If I succeed well, I may go into business again. If not I am not going to try to make money any more. I'll just come down to Tahiti and get a house and small piece of land and retire from all the trials, troubles and vexations of this wicked world and spend the remainder of my

days here. The natives are the happiest run of mortals I have ever seen; always good-natured, with no care or trouble. They laugh and grow fat. Some of the chiefs are enormous, great men and all are good size. They are pretty well civilized and a great many of them can read and write, have good houses and everything comfortable about them. The girls can play 'High low Jack' to perfection, as sundry bottles of ale that they won from me can testify and on Sunday and Thursday evenings, when the brass band performs they dance on the grass. Some of them dance the Polka and Waltze very well. For a savage people I like them very well.

I think by this time you must be tired of this letter and wish for the end. Well, we left on the 26th of March. Once more old Henry the Pilot guided us through the coral gateway and we were on the blue sea. We talked over the past events and I gazed on the beautiful landscape until darkness came on. The next morning it was not in sight.

We have been seven days sculling around among the Pamotu group. At times almost surrounded by coral reefs, but we fortunately did not strike any. The sun is now nearly exactly overhead. The altitude today at noon was 88°. I have added navigation to my other accomplishments and keep the reckoning with the Captain and consider myself competent to take charge of a vessel after this cruise. This is modest, you will think, but if I did not tell you of it, you would never know it.

The weather is terribly hot. We sleep on deck and dress very lightly. We live well and shall as long as the cargo lasts. We have on board 400 bbls sweet potatoes, 200 squashes, 46000 oranges, 40 hogs, 35 fowls, 90 dozen eggs, 4 bbls limes, 2000 cocoanuts and 50 bunches of bananas. If we were in San Francisco now we might make something out of it, but I am afraid before we get there the

oranges will all rot and a good part of the potatoes. All I hope is that the cargo will sell for enough to pay the charter of the schooner.

Next winter I hope to be able to purchase a vessel and 'tread the monarch of her peopled deck.' I want to take another cruise in the Pacific and go as far as the Fiji and Navigators groups. I think the trade between California and these islands will be of great importance. Tahiti will be a favorite place of resort during the winter. At the Sandwich Islands everything is nearly as high as in San Francisco. There are too many foreigners there.

March 13, 1851. *Latt today* 1° 47′ *South*

We are now where we ought to have the Southeast trades but the wind ever since we left has been east and N.E., so the idea that people have that the trade winds always blow in one direction is all exploded. The weather is cooler than at Tahiti but still comfortable. I like a warm climate and never have longed for those down-East winters since I left home.

I wish I could send you a basket of fruit. Bananas are my favorite. Fried bananas are our standing dish for breakfast but tell Mr. Trott that his hopeful son, Joseph, our cook, is a perfect ass. He doesn't know how to burn coffee, but he does know enough when he kills a pig to steal the liver and fry it for his own tooth. While I think of it, give my compliments to Joseph Buck and tell him that I think the Columbia a beautiful Schooner. She is a fine sea boat and sails first-rate, makes 140 miles a day, close hauled on the wind and if she will only beat the Jane Hersey to San Francisco I shall win a dinner at the Jackson House.

March 14, 1851

Today at twelve o'clock we were in lattitude 0° 18′

North, so we must have crossed the line about nine o'clock. This is the fourth time that I have crossed the Equator and although I have kept a sharp look out I never have seen anything like a line, so you may set it down that it is an imaginary line. We are in 146° 6′ W. longitude. Overhaul your Atlas and when found stick in a pin.

TONAI, ISLAND OF HAWAII, *April* 1, 1851

'Man proposes but God disposes.' I proposed, the next time I wrote, to be in San Francisco but circumstances over which we had no control obliged us to put in here. Our North East wind turned into a gale and blew for a week steadily. After it had abated, on Sunday night, March 23d, the schooner fetched a lurch and carried away the head of the foremast close to the Cap. When the foretopmast went, it carried away the main topmast and the jibboom and tore the mainsail from top to bottom. In fact, we were a perfect wreck. The next morning we cleared away and set the square sail and were off before it, toward Hilo. We were just 90 miles to the East of Hawaii. We fell to leeward of Hilo and finally fetched this place last Thursday. Here we are rigging the Schooner over again. Have cut the foremast and made a Brig of her.

This bay is on the northwest side of the island and a more barren, dreary-looking place you can't imagine. There is one store, four or five grass houses and lots of goats. Mr. Frazer found an old friend, Mr. Loyado, who has a sugar plantation ten miles in the interior at a place called Wainua. He invited us to come up and stop with him and on Saturday we walked up.

The country is much better in the interior: large plains covered with cattle and horses and looks very much like California. But there are no trees until higher

up. His place is 4000 feet high and is close to the great volcano, Mauna loa, which is 13,600 feet high with the top covered with snow. He has 100 acres in sugar cane and a fine house, sugar mill, shops, etc. There are four or five white men and 123 natives on the plantation. He gives them four dollars per month and boards them, paying them in goods out of his store at an enormous profit. He has been here eighteen years and has made a fortune. He and all the other white men are married to native women. He lives first-rate and showed us every attention. He is a New Yorker and a fine, open-hearted man whose house is always open to strangers.

On Sunday I went to church. The Rev. Mr. Lyons, who is the missionary here, seated me with his family. He is very much liked and respected by the foreigners, which is not generally the case. It was communion day and a child was baptised. Everything was done as at home but the congregation looked gay as the women wear white dresses and bright red or orange colored shawls. In personal appearance they are vastly inferior to the natives of Tahiti. There was not one handsome woman in the house. They are dirty and their houses are filthy. They have no tropical fruits here at all and live on taro and fish. The men are good fellows to work and make good sailors. They are great people to visit and the vessels running from one island to another go with their decks covered with passengers.

The Schooner Caroline lay here bound for Salina. Captain Brown politely invited us on board to tea. He had his wife with him. She is a native of Hupuri, an island near Tahiti, and all his men were kanakas and had their wives on board. Brown had a fine, large cabin with a sofa and mirrors and everything good to eat and drink, and with his pretty wife to light his cigar for him seemed to take as much comfort as a man can at sea.

I came down from Wainua yesterday and spent the afternoon rambling along the beach. They are inveterate beggars here. If you go into a house they want a quarter and if they do anything for you they want to be paid California prices. This is rather disgusting after the hospitable treatment I received at the bamboo houses at Tahiti, where I was always welcome to eat, drink, smoke and sleep and give them what I pleased, or at the Marquesas where I used to have a boy to wait on me and run after cocoanuts and pull in the boat all day for a Jews-harp. But they have their eye-teeth cut here. At the Marquesas money is of no value, the only place I have ever seen where this is the case.

Old 'Blue face,' a chief at Wahooya who went over to Dominique with us, gave us two boat loads of wood and brought off two dollars wrapped up in a rag and gave the Captain. We told him that the wood was enough but he said the money was not the least use to him and would insist on the Captain keeping it. They are true children of nature and in my opinion vastly better off and happier in this state than after they know the wants and vices attendant on intercourse with foreigners, like these poor miserable people ashore here. This is no argument against the Missionaries. They try and I believe do the natives a great deal of good in learning them to read and write and keep the Sabbath, but they have hard work to make Christians of them and they are not half so pious and moral as I supposed from reading missionary reports.

Friday, April 4, 1851

We have completed our repairs and are ready for sea. We have filled up our water casks for the sixth time and have bought a goat so we shall have milk as long as she lives.

Saturday morning

We saw the island of Hawaii, also Maui, Molokai and Oahu. I see by the Polynesian that Judd, on his return from his tour with the two princesses, presented the King with two daguerreotypes from A. G. Benson.[1] I supposed A. G. entertained the royal kanakas. Wonder if the portraits were A. G.'s family?

SAN FRANCISCO, *May* 7, 1851

Once more entered the Golden Gate today, sixty-seven days from Tahiti and thirty-three from Hawaii. For the first week out we had northeast wind and ran off northwest. Then a week calm and then a week a gale of wind from the N.E., off course, right ahead. For three days it blew so hard that we carried nothing but a storm stay sail, lashed the helm and all hands went below and let her worry. When it abated we got an observation and found ourselves in latt 44° N., long 167° W., actually nearer Kansehatsa than California.

The second Sunday out carried away the fore topmast and the jibboom for the second time but Capt. P. rigged the topmast so that we could set the topsail, reefed and spliced the boom and in this way we crawled along. We ate up all our provisions but potatoes and hard bread but we have the consolation that the Jane A. Hersey only arrived twelves hours before us and we beat the John Alvyn from Towahae by three days. The weather has been awful on the Pacific this Spring. When we approached the harbor we noticed the water covered with cinders and pieces of burnt wood and when the boarding officer boarded us he gave us the news that San Francisco had disappeared — all burnt up. We left a fine, flourishing city built of brick, mostly, and supposed to be fireproof but it was all gone, sure enough; nothing but the

[1] A. G. Benson was a cousin of the author.

ends of the long wharves and the outskirts of the city left. I could hardly find where the streets used to be. This is the fourth time that this unfortunate city has been destroyed. I should think that they would be discouraged entirely, but they are already rebuilding it fast, but it has received an awful blow and it will be a long time before it gets up again as it was before.

Trade is pretty good. We have commenced picking over our cargo and about one half the oranges are good. We have sold them all for $40 per thousand. The potatoes are nearly all good and look as well as when they were taken in. They are worth about 7¢ per lb now. If we had arrived a month ago, as we ought to with an average passage, we should have done well. As it is, it will take all probably to pay the vessel and crews wages, etc. I shall be perfectly satisfied if it does not bring me in debt and call it time and money well spent.

Ed Kirk is with Flint & P. still. He spent the night on board and gave me several letters from you and Father. I hear Sewall is at Sacramento with Stover. I am afraid he lays idle too much, but he always was lazy. I expect to go to the mines after we get through. Miners are doing as well as ever and business is uncertain. I suppose you think that after such a voyage I shall have had enough of the sea, but there is no business suits me so well as a trading voyage and I never have been better contented than this winter. I have become perfectly accustomed to calms and gales and have schooled myself to observe the following maxim: 'Never to grumble at what can be helped and what can't be helped.'

I have had such hard luck lately in business and have gone through so many dangers and had my life saved that I think Providence has something in reserve for me yet and I have a presentiment I shall find a small pile in the mines. It is the heighth of my ambition now (for I

have given up all idea of ever making a fortune) to make money to pay my debts and buy a fine clipper vessel and go on another cruise among those 'Gems of the Ocean.' I hope to be able to by next winter — to carry out my plans. I wish almost you had remained an old maid so you would go with me for I know you and I think alike about this. I delight to visit and hold intercourse with foreign countries and next to a beautiful woman I admire a handsome vessel and in this harbor you can suit yourself, at your own price almost. There are about five hundred lying here now. It is astonishing but not one burnt up.

The commerce of San Francisco is extending to all parts of the Pacific and all sorts of articles are brought here. One vessel from Mexico brought a cargo of cats and they sold readily for $8 and $12. If I owned a vessel I know of several voyages that I think would pay well. During this cruise I have gotten a great deal of information about the Pacific Islands and I hope to turn it to some account by and by.

I don't think I shall write you again until next Fall. I shall go up country and find Cole, and then I don't know where I shall be. Write to San Francisco for I shall make this my headquarters and most probably shall be here next Fall.

Kirk sends his respects. He likes California very much. I have some curiousities from the Islands that I should like to send you and will the first opportunity. You can dress your little Alice in tappa, 'a la Marquese,' but you ought to learn how to swim for certainly I never saw girls in such graceful attitudes or look so bewitching as these island nymphs swimming.

I remain, your affectionate brother in decayed circumstances.

March 14, 1851

I have just finished my letter to Father. I send this by Captain Moody, who goes to Belfast direct, to-morrow. So if you get it you will be lucky.

Saw John Benson today. Ed is commisary for the troops fighting the Indians. Saw Mr. Frazer, our passenger. He is going to buy a vessel and going back to the Marquesas. He wants to colonize one of the islands and wants me to go with him and spend a year at least. He is going to introduce coffee and sugar cane. I think they both might be cultivated there to advantage. A white man with a little tact might do anything with the natives and live like a monarch. Old Frazer is rich and if he will give me a good chance, I don't know but what I may be induced to go. Still I want a vessel of my own and go on my own account and then I have a cruise shaped out. But all in good time, dear Mary.

'Aloha' — love to you, as the Vahines say.

Hermitage Rancho, *January 1st*, 1852

I wish you a happy New Year and you may consider yourself kissed. Now, what apology shall I make for neglecting you so long. Since the 15th of May I have not written a word to the States. I received a letter from you dated July 20th and that is my latest advises from home. I have been daily looking for a notice in the papers inquiring for the whereabouts of a young man about my size but now I will set your mind at rest.

I am at present here with Cole. He and Lindley have dissolved and divided the farm after a great deal of trouble. Lindley is the County Clerk and Recorder elect of Yuba County, an office worth $10,000 per year in this State. On account of his spending so much money and time to get this office, was the cause of the difficulty with Cole. They wrote me to come down from Downieville

and help settle their affairs. This accounts for my leaving the mines and being here.

Well, when I arrived the two men were at bay. Lindley had vamosed the ranch and was living in Marysville. They could not speak with each other. I was appointed an ambassador extraordinary on the part of Cole to meet the enemy and make terms. I have accomplished this and the whole thing is settled. Cole retains all the property and 540 acres of land. Lindley has the rest of the rancho.

Since I wrote you on the 15th of May, last I have been in Downieville, 80 miles above Marysville, at the forks of the Yuba. I have been at work in the mines. My health has been excellent; my food: beef steaks and bread; but my success? That is the question. Had I made some thousands I should take great pleasure in describing to you the operation of mining, the mode of life, etc., but as it is, I will refer you to Father's letter and to the *lament* I send you enclosed. It hits my case exactly. For some reason I am not permitted to accumulate any of that substance called: GOLD. Further than enough to live comfortably, I have never been dead broke and owe nothing in this country, on the contrary I have a great deal of money and favours due me and have always fed well and dressed to suit my taste, but these *big stakes* that some make are denied me.

Now, I am particularly anxious to make $2,000 to pay all my debts. I thought this past summer I could do it and I have tried hard from early morn till dewy eve for five months. I have laboured hunting after gold and when I got through I had $100. Less than when I began. Now, is not this rather hard luck? What have I done? What sins have I committed to be visited with such luck? But I am as light hearted as ever and do not despair of being able to come out all right in the end. The gold is not all dug out yet.

Downieville is one of the richest mining towns in the State. Upwards of $2,000,000 has been dug there this season by some three or four thousand men. The last 50 miles of the way to Downieville is only a mule trail, no wagons are seen in the streets, everything is packed and yet in this 'hole in the ground' as it is called, you will find two hundred buildings, two saw mills, a theatre and all the necessaries of life and cheap, too, for this country. Downieville is only 20 miles from the summit of the Sierra Nevada which is covered with snow the year round.

The climate was truly delightful last summer, but the winter is very much like Maine. Before I left it was very cold and on the 20th of November we had an old fashioned snow storm. It all melted, however, the next day. Now, come down into this valley of the Yuba, 75 miles from Downieville to where I am writing today and look at the country. We have had some heavy rains lately and the 'fields stand dressed in living green.' The farmers are ploughing. Everything is as forward as in May with you, so you see we can have any kind of a climate we choose in this glorious country.

I have been at Sacramento City since I came down. Our house is rented to two Frenchmen and called the Eureka. We rent it now for $100 per month and Cole has been cheated of all the rent this summer but the last two months principally by a female: Mrs. Johnson, who vamosed leaving rent unpaid as usual. I tried this time to collect something but Mrs. Johnson is living in furnished apartments and has nothing of her own that I could attach. O woman, woman! They tell about men losing all honor, and self-respect when they arrive in this country! This is in some measure true but in regard to *women* it's certainly holding good. All that keeps them up at home is the rules of society. No sooner do they get

out of that restraint than they show out their natural dispositions. Among men, some few retain all their principles in this country and are the same here as at home, but of all the women of my acquaintance there is none, no, not one. But society is improving in some respects. Gentlemen are not seen in gambling saloons as formerly, banking at monte. Nor is it considered hardly respectable to be seen riding out sunday with a Mexican Senorita but there are a good many things yet to be reformed but they will all be accomplished in time.

Sacramento is the most like home to me of any place in this country and it is the prettiest city and the most orderly in the State. By the number of ladies and children I saw at church and in the streets I should think there must be a great many families there. I saw all my old friends and had a very pleasant visit.

Oh, that I were in New York today. That is the place to spend New Years, but I am afraid I should find but few of my friends. I am going up to call on Mrs. Lindley this evening. She is the only lady I know of.

Died on the 24th inst our beautiful blood mare: Jenny Lind, one that I purchased in Carson Valley for $16 and Cole could have taken $300 for her at one time but asked $500. It never rains but it pours.

HERMITAGE RANCHO, *February* 24, 1852

I learn that you have changed houses. I don't believe I shall feel at home in B. if ever I am allowed to get there, you have all moved about so. I should like to find you all in the old house, the barn and yard and I can't place you anywhere but in the little dining room or at the piano in the nice parlor; but if it suits you I have nothing to say. Some of the old settlers, too, I see are going off and then, however much you may stave off the idea, I expect you are growing old. I know that women, espe-

cially American women, will fade out early and you may as well acknowledge the corn that the 'hey day of youth' with you is passed, lamentable fact. I shall not be at all surprised to find you wrinkled, the elasticity in your step gone and your whole tout ensemble decidedly passee. But don't feel grieved at it. I shan't laugh at you. I shall regard you with a kind of reverence, as I used to Mrs. Doctor Moulton, bless her old soul. Now, I have hardly attained my growth. The life I have led for the last three years, far removed from all those dissipations and vices which in civilized countries make such havoc on the constitution of a young man, has tended to develope all my physical energies and I am always healthy and sound every way. If we should be permitted to meet each other in the course of a year or two (which I fervently hope we may) the contrast between the two children will indeed be great.

I have been here since I wrote you, in the old business again: farming, raising chickens, riding wild mules, sowing onions and doing the agreeable to the customers at the Hermitage Hotel, which being strictly interpreted means carving and waiting on the table, making port wine sangarees and milk punches for the ladies who ride out from Marysville and invariably get thirsty, and gassing with travellers generally.

This is truly a beautiful country about here and the climate delightful. No snow, no frost even. Grain all up and vegetables ditto. If it was only settled by good families with a smart sprinkling of young ladies, it would be a Paradise. But unfortunately it is cursed with the most degraded set of Irish squatters, Pike Co. Missourians and mean Yankees that it has ever been my lot to live among in California. We have no society outside of our own house but Lindly's family and in Marysville. We have to corral our stock nights, to prevent its being

stolen and in addition to our kind neighbors we have 'the poor Indian,' whose untutored mine 'can't see God anywhere' (as Pope says), occasionally making a descent from his mountain home and cleaning out all the clothes-lines and spare articles lying around loose. The magpies and coons eat up all the lettuce and cabbage plants and the squatters have squat on all Cole's land but 160 acres, it being a part of the religion of the Western people that no man has a right to any more of this earth's surface than that amount. So you see there are some drawbacks to this fine soil and climate.

Last night the aristocracy of Marysville had a Grand Ball at the U.S. Hotel. I have not heard the particulars but suppose it was a grand affair as people throw themselves on such occasions here. Perhaps you will think it strange that I do not mix in these brilliant assemblies. Well, in the first place I 'hain't got no clothes' and I don't think the fun equal to the expense. I had a very pressing invite to go to a Ball at Parkhurst & Arnold's Ranch on the Sacramento River. Parkhurst promised me some fine sport as he had nine Pike Co. girls engaged; but this was too far (30 miles). The only dancing I have indulged in was at a fandango at the Sonorian Camp, three miles from here. It is a regular Mexican town, some 3000 people and about 40 houses and a number of Mexican families engaged in packing mules. They patronise our Rancho and most all know me and I take every opportunity to learn Spanish and can converse pretty well now as it is of great service here.

Well, I heard of the fandango and I went. It was held in a good-sized room with a bar on one side, of course, and crowded with men and women, all smoking. The orchestra consisted of two fiddles and guitars and made pretty good music. The men were dressed in sky-blue velvet pants, open at the sides and rows of buttons, with

CELEBRATION OF WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY IN SAN FRANCISCO, FEBRUARY 23, 1852

white drawers, red sash and a fancy shirt. The Senoritas, with white muslin dresses, stretched so stiffly that you could not get very near, and silk stockings, looked very pretty. We had cottilions and waltzes and one Senorita danced a fancy dance and made more noise with her little feet and slippers than I could with thick boots. She told me it was the 'Valse Alleman,' never has been published, I guess. Their cotillions are the same as ours except that the last figure is 'all promenade to the Bar,' where you and your fair partner imbibe.

The Fandango went off well. I was very much amused and came away without being stabbed, which was lucky as such things often happen.

P.S. I have not heard from Sewall since I wrote. Tell Father have nothing of interest to write him. Give my love to Mother. Hope her teeth are as good as mine. Will send Father paper. Not decided whether to stop here or go to mining — it depends on the digging. Downieville is all burnt up. Loss $750,000. Will be built again.

WEAVERVILLE, *June* 9, 1852

I have settled down once more and intend to stay settled if the town I have selected does not die out as a great many places do in this mushroom country, but I suppose the locality of this place is unknown to you. Look on the map and find Shasta. On the head waters of the Sacramento and forty miles north, ten miles from Trinity River, is Weaverville. It is situated in a beautiful valley, surrounded by mountains. Those on the north are still covered with snow. This is the best mining country in California as the dirt all pays from the surface in most places.

The town contains about forty buildings and 1200 inhabitants in the vicinity. We have rented a good store and arrived with our goods last week. It costs 13¢ per lb

to get goods here from Sacramento City, 150 miles by steamboat, 275 by wagon and 40 on the backs of mules. Articles are not quite as cheap as in Bucksport, but we board for $15 per week. Our trade is better than I expected and think we shall do well. We started on what we got for our house in Sacramento City, $2000, and of course had to begin small; but we have already sold quite an amount of goods and Cole goes down today for more. So now you know what I am doing and what I intend to do for the next two years, if nothing extraordinary takes place. At the expiration of that time my five years will be up. If successful I shall certainly come home. If not, I shall probably get entirely disgusted with trying to make money and emigrate to Mexico or the Marquesas.

I have spent three weeks in San Francisco and three in Sacramento City since I wrote you. I dressed myself up, mingled in all the gaieties and some of the dissipations of these cities and without being extravagant, spent enough money to keep up with those whose company I kept. I don't want you to understand that I prefer bad company. I like to see all kinds of life and human nature but I really prefer sensible and respectable companions to low and vicious ones, and it has always been my aim to move in the highest society and if I am ever able to do as I like I shall. I shall be aristocratic to a certainty, but I am democratic enough now. However, I possess a contented mind, which as the actor says 'is a wall of brass.'

Speaking of this, I took some real pleasure in visiting the theatres. This I consider a sensible amusement. Madame Biscaliante carried me back in imagination to the Opera House at New York and I spent two delightful evenings (and three dollars) in listening to her.

Kirk and I enjoyed many pleasant evenings together. You need not be afraid for him. He has a love for money and not much taste for those revels and blow outs that

young men too often indulge in. Charley Robinson is a little faster but by no means dissipated. He is doing well at his business. John Benson has become rich speculating and living easy and is, withal, a great ladies man.

On our way up we pass through Colusa, on the Sacramento River. Here we leave the steamboat and take the stage. This is the loveliest spot in California. The prairies at this season were covered with flowers. The town is built under the large oaks and is completely shaded. There is a large rancheria of Indians here and, in fact, there are more Indians than whites in the place. The weather was awfully hot and I was very strongly reminded of the Islands, to see the whole tribe in swimming in the river, an example we followed as it was the only way to keep cool. In the afternoon we had a horse race and 'there was a sound of revelry by night.' Music arose from the rancheria and we lit our cigars and strolled out to see what was the row. We found out that there was a wedding going on.

The evening was fine, with a full moon, and seated around in a circle were one or two hundred Indians with goose wings in their hands to keep time with. The leader gave a grand flourish with his wing and then sang a solo. Then with another grand flourish, he brought in the whole chorus. They kept good time and made no discords and the effect was not bad. After singing sometime there was a loud call for cheunnek (food) and large baskets of acorn bread and dried salmon were emptied. Then another concert.

At twelve I went to bed and the last sound I heard was the sacred order, for it sounded like 'chevova.' These are the best specimens of the Diggers to be seen in the country. They are all clothed and the men work discharging the boats and the girls are employed as servants in the

Public Houses and they do first-rate. At Hall's Ranch they wait on the table and are clean and neat... ask you whether you will have tea or coffee. The Mountain Diggers are another race, perfectly wild and untamable. You never see one and war to the knife exists between them and the whites. They waylay and murder all they can and the whites shoot every Indian that shows himself. A short time ago they killed a Mr. Anderson from this place, close by town. A party of men went out, discovered the rancheria, surrounded it and killed 140 Indians. They brought in one squaw and a little boy. Their destiny is to be exterminated.

Write me a long letter now and direct to Shasta and now that I am settled down I will resume my regular correspondence, provided always you keep up your end.

WEAVERVILLE, *July 6th*, 1852

Cole has returned from below and we have a good stock of goods. Trade is slow and will not be right brisk until the rainy season on account of the scarcity of water, but we do a very good business and increasing every day. Some of the claims will pay very well. Last Saturday night, four men came into the store and weighed their gold that they had dug that week $1960.00. This is very good wages. But they don't all pay at that rate. Our town is now built up with good buildings as we have a saw mill and plenty of lumber.

As to the society — it is decidedly bad, gambling, drinking, and fighting being the amusements of the miners in their leisure hours. Saturday night is usually celebrated by such hideous yells and occassionally a volley from their revolvers which makes it rather dangerous to be standing around. At least a poor inoffensive jackass found it so the other night. I am glad to be able to say that the majority of the people are from Pike Co, although there

are quite a number from Maine. Among my acquaintances that I have found here is ex-Midshipman Dallas, son of the late Commander Dallas. He has tried mining; got sick, and is now trying to live as a Notary Public Scrivener. He is a very gentlemanly fellow, good company, boasts a good deal of his family and the society he has moved in and is generally called 'the Prince.' Mr. Harper, a lounger, has his wife here, and I believe there are four other families in town, and one young lady. Also I must not forget Miss Jigger, the young squaw brought in from the Rancheria that was destroyed. She is dressed up and prefers a civilized to a savage life, if you can call this a civilized community.

Last Sunday was the glorious 4th of July, and in this country people get most gloriously drunk generally. But in this place we had an awful tragedy in the morning which tended to sober people a little. You will probably see reports of it in the papers, but as it took place opposite our store, and I was an eye witness, I will give you the facts. A certain Doctor Horton built a large saloon and public house called the American. He kept a woman called Eliza, Vanderburg family from New Orleans. He was sued for a debt contracted in San Francisco and made his house over to the woman. This was decided to be a fraud and the Sheriff ordered to take possession and sell the property by Judge Lake of San Francisco. On application of the woman, Judge Williams of this district granted an injunction. The Sheriff wrote to Judge Lake to know whom he should obey. He ordered him to go on and sell as Judge Williams had no authority to grant the injunction having previously assisted to sell the property. The Sheriff proceeded on Sunday morning to take possession. Horton and the woman armed with revolvers drove him from the house. Now Diggon, the Sheriff is game to the backbone. He summoned a possee of four or five men

and went in and showed his authority and ordered a man to nail up the doors. Horton told the woman to 'shoot his head off.' Diggon says, 'If you shoot you are a dead man.' She fired at the man and missed. Horton fired at the Sheriff and shot him in the groin. The crowd rushed out of the house leaving the Sheriff and his men and Horton and the woman to fight it out. Some fifteen or twenty shots were heard and then all was still. I went over and went in and saw Horton and the woman lying side by side riddled with balls. In five minutes both were dead. The Sheriff were all of the party that was hit and he had strength to walk to the house. He will probably recover. This put a damper on the Fourth and people were quiet all day. Mr. Allen called the people together and related the facts of the suit and most of them think that the Sheriff was right. According to the California Code if one man strikes another without provocation he has a perfect right to shoot him down. Everyone goes armed and at the least quarrel at a gambling saloon out come the revolvers. Someone sings out, 'Don't shoot,' the crowd surge back, and they blaze away. A man's life is but little thought of. Sunday these two persons were killed; yesterday buried; and today almost forgotten.

In the midst of this ungodly community Mr. Hill. a Baptist minister, preaches every Wednesday evening, Standing on the steps of a house he preaches to the whole town. He is a good preacher, but the fruit has not appeared as yet. The Indians steal a mule now and then, but no one has been hurt by them lately.

I see by the papers a revolution has broken out in the dominions of Queen —— and she is likely to lose all her kingdom but Tahiti. She called on the French and English to assist her, but in vain. If I had been there and she had called on me I would have gone to the rescue. I should probably have been made a general at least. I shall

wait until another war with Mexico — then I am in, for we are bound to have the whole and the sooner such an event takes place the better for Mexico's good.

Goods are very high, especially provisions, and people that are shipping goods to this country now will make their piles. Hams have gone up to 40¢ flour 15¢, pork 40¢. An immense immigration is expected in from the plains soon and the arrivals at San Francisco are immense. The Chinese bid fair to overrun the country. They could send a million, you know, and not miss them. People are getting really alarmed at the great number coming. I see that 18 women arrived in full blown costume, the style of dress in China. Lastly the country is going ahead and is destined to be the greatest state in the Union. I am anxious to know who is the Whig Nominee for President as I shall take the stump if it is Webster. Write me all the affairs in and about Bucksport as anything will be interesting.

WEAVERVILLE, *August* 9, 1852

Nothing remarkable has occurred since my last letter. I don't think there has been a fight since last Sunday. Two of my old Sacramento City friends, Mr. Burnell and Young, have been here from Humboldt Bay. They are seeing about bringing Trinity River through this place. If this plan is carried out it will be the making of the place. Perhaps I have squat in the right place after all.

Mr. and Mrs. Harper occupy the room over our store. He is a lawyer. She is from Mo. and the only lady of any refinement I have ever met with from that State. Mrs. H. is quite young and quite pretty. She was educated in a Convent. She met Mr. H. at Saratoga when she was twelve years old. They fell in love and were married privately but did not live together for some years on account of the opposition of her parents. Mrs. H.

plays the guitar and sings very well. She can discourse about the opera and theatre, which she saw in New York. She has considerable taste in these matters. Mrs. H. while on the plains, contracted the habit of smoking and she wings in on us extensively for cigars, sardines, etc. for which we can't charge, of course — she has such a winning way of coming down stairs and appropriating these little things.

Mrs. H. has not the most remote idea about housekeeping, cooking, etc. They have a darky to do all these things who makes more sport for us than anything else. He has a great affection for our whiskey barrel so we have allowed him three drinks per day for doing our cooking. Mrs. H. reminds me very much of Dora in David Copperfield: a Child Wife. But she pouts sometimes and we are obliged to listen to some family jaws upstairs. When Tweedy (she calls Henry 'Tweedy') stays out late and tries to make his peace she gives him fits. All of which sounds very foolish and tends to disgust me with matrimonial life. But Mrs. H. is good company and it seems like home to see her about and hear her sing. Mrs. H. and the darky are trying to preserve some watermelons today and she is now sitting on the stairs trying to think how her Mother used to do it.

We have some fine gardens in the vicinity and cartloads of watermelons, cucumbers and vegetables of all kinds, every day. The climate is delightful as the weather is not too hot. We are free from all those fashions about dress and personal appearances which bother you so much at home. I have not worn a coat or vest for two months.

Business is dull and flies plenty. I have just finished David Copperfield. You spoke so highly of it I read it. Mr. Micawber and wife are curious characters, but some parts of it are silly. It has not that sparkling wit that the Pickwick Papers has, but it is a very good story.

Yesterday completed my third year in California and found me worse off then when I entered it. This is not very encouraging but it is the fortune of war. I have enjoyed myself and lived most of the time just as I wanted to. My conscience does not reproach me for not having tried to make a fortune for I have not been idle nor dissipated and all that has been wanting is 'luck.' Now, I should like to be moderately rich but I believe I don't love money well enough to hoard up every cent and make it the whole end and aim of my being. When a man starts in life and determines to get rich at any sacrifice and bends all his faculties to this one object I believe would succeed, certainly. But after getting it what good does it do him? He has spent the best years of his life and is unfit for anything but to continue on the same line. I had rather be poor and enjoy life as I go. If I ever become rich it will be by accident, never by patient and persevering toil. I know my own character well enough for this.

The third day of this month also reminded me of my age, 26 I believe. You seem to think I am young enough to wait awhile before marrying but I think I am old enough but, fortunately perhaps for me, women are so scarce here yet that there is no great danger of my committing that sin. I shall have to go down to Mexico or Chile to find one for it is no use to come home for one if I am not rich. And what's the use of my getting married unless I better my conditions. I have never received a lock of Miss Goodale's hair. I don't think it would be any consolation to receive a large quantity of Miss Goodale's hair. In fact, I have almost forgotten her. I left New York 'In maiden meditation, fancy free,' and have been so ever since and I doubt whether I ever shall be in that state that David C. says he was in: 'steeped in Dora.' My fancy has been taken frequently but it doesn't last and if your object in having me wait until I get home in

order that you may have that ever-delightful occupation of Old Maids of Bucksport in getting me engaged, etc., I am afraid you will have a hard job. I am but half civilized now and you will recollect that I wanted always 'love's majesty' so you had better give up the idea.

If there is anything that I feel depressed about, it is the music that you can enjoy in New York now. What wouldn't I do to hear M. Alboni and an opera again. Write me. I am out of paper. Haven't said half I want to, but, Adios.

WEAVERVILLE, *September* 22, 1852

A great many of the emigrants from the plains are coming here and we have had several females added to our society. I hope they will improve it. Nothing fatal has taken place since my last letter but there have been some awfully close shaves. One man has been shot through the cravat, one through the hat and one in the arm. The Weaverville Hotel has been sacked and fist fights without number have come off, but as nobody has been killed nothing has been done.

We are immersed in politics. Nothing else is talked about and the party lines are drawn tight. There is no half-way ground here, no neutral party. It is 'Scott and Graham' or 'Pierce and King.' Of course, you know what side I shout for and our party outnumbers the other vastly. I am quite prominent on the subject and was one of the delegates to the County Convention and might have run for the Legislature had I been able to attend to it (What do you think of that!). But it costs something to canvass a county and get an office here. We have selected good men and I think the Whig ticket in this county will be elected sure.

We have erected a pole 130 feet high with a Scott and Graham flag, of the largest size, at a cost of $300. One

man gave $50 toward it — Judge Turner. He is going to spend $10,000 in this and Klamath Counties to elect the Whig ticket. So you see we go into politics like everything else here: with a rush.

I have just returned from a trip to the South Fork of Trinity River, where I spent two days with a party shooting. It is the greatest country for game I have seen in the State. Unlike most parts of the mines, here is a large valley or meadow of good land, from one to five miles broad and thirty long, covered with grass and the banks of the streams lined with cottonwood trees. This valley is hemmed in with lofty mountains and is a beautiful spot. There is a natural bridge of rock across the stream and several sulphur springs here. It is a favorite resort of the Indians and the squaws are now busily engaged gathering seeds and berries for winter. They are peaceable now and are living near the whites. Several of them have been in town and efforts are now being made to bring them all in and make them live within reach. This is far better than keeping them in the mountains and having continual war. It was in this valley that the rancherio was situated that was destroyed last Spring, when 125 Indians were killed and only two were saved alive. 'Kate,' a squaw about 16 years old, crawled into a log and has since been living in town and has no desire to go back, and a little one that Mrs. Ewing has adopted to grow up with her child.

We saw lots of fish weirs and snares for deer made by the Indians with great ingenuity. We shot lots of game: deer, grey squirrels, pigeons, grouse, quails, etc., and then such eating you never saw! We had venison stewed with pigeons and broiled quails, fricasseed squirrel, roast ribs, venison steaks, etc. You used to think I ate some at home but if you have been at our camp that night and seen the enormous quantity I devoured, you would not like to

board me. But if you want to get up an appetite just stroll over the mountains all day without anything to eat. And then, you never saw any game fit to eat down East. Everything is fat here. We saw tracks of a grizzly but did not meet with him, and in the night 'heard a savage lion's awful roar'! These animals called a California lion are more like a panther. I saw one at Shasta in a cage, over six feet long.

If there is anything I enjoy it is an excursion like this and I think Joseph would. If you hear anyone from this country calling this a poor miserable barren country, tell them I can take my rifle and ammunition and live better than they can at home on a good income.

I shall be right glad to see Sarah. She will probably be here about the 1st of November if she gets up here without being sick. She can't fail to be healthy and although it is sickly this fall in the valley, it is perfectly healthy here.

There is not a lb of flour in town. It is worth $35 a bbl at San Francisco and the last was sold here for 45¢ a pound. Beef and potatoes are plentiful. There is a garden in town owned by a Mr. Howe, who has raised this season 32,000 hills of potatoes. They average 2½ lbs to the hill and sell for 20¢ per lb. Now figure that up and then see how many farms in the State of Maine it would take to produce the amount! They have found gold in his garden this winter, so it will probably be dug up.

Cole leaves in a few minutes for Shasta and I must close or, as we say here at political speeches when they don't suit, 'dry up.' Give my love to the 'Old Folks at Home'...

WEAVERVILLE, *October* 5, 1852

Since my last letter the Indian Chiefs from the South Fork have come in and sued for peace and the people have

had so much business on hand that mining has been neglected.

King 'Tulas' was accompanied by eight warriors and a large crowd assembled to hear him tell his story. A young man who has resided some years among them acted as interpreter. A stand was erected and the old chief mounted the rostrum without the slightest embarrasment and talked like a book. He was greeted with hearty cheers and his appearance was interesting. We dressed him up in white pants and shirt, two coats and a beaver hat and *white kids*, which he felt very proud of. The language is not as rough as I supposed and his gestures were natural. Of course we had great sport: 'Now he's on internal improvements,' says one. 'Ask him if he goes for Scott,' says another. But old Tulas talked right to the point. He promised to eat no more mules if he could be allowed to come on to the river and fish, and said 'he was glad to see we had such good houses and plenty of blankets and he would come over this winter and live with us.'

The Treaty was drawn up and signed and afterwards we had a war dance. A large ring was formed and lighted with candles and the crowd at last *sat down in front* and order was restored. There must have been at least a thousand persons present. The Indians dressed in all their finery with their bows and arrows came bounding into the ring and were received with thundering applause. They sang and yelled and danced after the most approved style probably. The squaw Kate sat as long as she could and then went in and was as savage as ever. The old associations came over her and she couldn't stand still.

The entertainment went off very well but it was nothing to the grand Hoolah Hoolah at Tahiti.

The Indians went back very pleased with their visit and I don't think it will be their fault if the Treaty is

broken, as the wrong in most all cases is first on the side of the whites. The poor Indians have been treated with great cruelty, I always thought, by our forefathers at home, but they have been killed off in this State like some wild animals, without the slightest cause and driven to actual starvation. Moreover, these Indians in the mountains are not so mean a race as those in the valley. They are larger and possess more intelligence and are easier civilized than any other Indians I have ever seen. There are five boys in town who are as bright and smart as any white boys. Enough said about the Diggers.

While we were in the midst of the Treaty a man by the name of Holt, who started to go to Shasta, was found shot about 2 miles from town. Suspicion immediately fell on an Irishman: Michael Grant, who was seen in company with him close by the spot where he was found. He was arrested and from the facts which soon came out, the sovereign people: i.e. a mob, held a meeting and resolved to take him. He was taken and the question put to the people whether he should be tried by the people or by the legal tribunal. The Judge was asked how long it would be before he could be tried by the Court and he stated that the Court could not sit until next January and as there is no jail nor money in the treasury to keep him and the credit of the County good for nothing, it was decided that it would save time and money and be altogether better to try him and hang him right off.

A Judge was appointed, a jury impaneled and he was tried and found guilty. After the sentence was read a dispute arose as to whether he should be hung right up the next morning or have ten days. Although a majority of the people voted for ten days the minority held on to hang him the next day. High words ensued. Pistols were drawn and I thought for sometime that half a dozen more lives would be lost in discussing this point. But finally the

few blood-thirsty scoundrels (who will probably be hung themselves) were ruled down and ten days were given him. The time expired to-day and at eleven o'clock to-day a wagon on which he was standing was driven out from under which caused his death by strangulation. He had a Catholic Priest to attend on him, which he said was a great consolation and died perfectly resigned to his lot. He was about 25 years of age.

Although no one has the slightest doubt as to his guilt and I think he suffered justly, yet I say Heaven preserve me from falling into the hands of an excited people. It is a hard tribunal and if circumstances are against you, however innocent you may be, you stand no chance. Give me a dungeon in the Tombs and all the police of New York first.

Cole goes down to San Francisco tomorrow and will wait for Sarah. I shall be glad to see her. Business is good and if we had more capital we could make lots of money. We began on $2000 and we have nearly doubled that now. We take in nearly all dust at $16 per oz and in S. F. get $17.25 for it. The rise in goods this season has made immense fortunes 'below' but here is the best place in the long run, as this winter they will probably lose about as much.

The weather is very cold. We occupy an elevated position, probably four or five thousand feet above the Pacific. It freezes every night now, solid, and snow fell on the mountains in sight, the other night. But the climate is not like yours, as it is just as cold now as in January.

Write me every month and if you don't like these blood-thirsty letters say so and I will gloss it over.

WEAVERVILLE, *December* 18, 1852

In my last letter I wrote you about the snow on the mountains and I really had an idea of going up just to

roll in it. Since then I have been saved the trouble for the last four days we have had an incessant snow storm and it now lays about two feet deep all over the country and from four to six feet on the mountains a little way out of town. At first we snow-balled, the whole town engaging in the sport like school boys, but after a while the snow accumulated on the lightly built roofs and down came one house. We dug out our cow, not hurt much. Yesterday morning down came a store, a perfect smash. We rushed in and dug out two men. One of them said he had 1000 bbls on his back for some time but strange to say, neither of them was much hurt. The bottles of claret, however, suffered and the snow looked tinged with blood. After this, we mounted the roofs and shovelled off the snow.

Owing to this long spell of weather there is a right smart chance of a famine. No mule trains can get through and we are reduced to beef and some of us are fortunate enough to have a few potatoes. There is no flour nor meal nor beans. I have sold everything in the shape of eatables but the pickles and sardines and the sardines are going fast. I was fortunate enough to buy of a man on the river just before the snow set in, 2200 lbs of potatoes. We saved a few to eat and I sold the rest in one day for 37½¢ per lb (made $250 easy). Flour has been selling at 75¢ per lb. This is awful business for the miners but owing to the rise in everything, we have made more than in all the previous summer and if we had had the money to have laid in a large stock of flour we could have made a fortune. Another chance slipped by, you see. I am content, however. Now, if I go into a speculation to get my money back I have come out the loser so often.

Rufus Stover left here yesterday for the lower country, starved out. Howard Buck is still staying at the North Fork about 30 miles from here, living on venison. All the

WEAVERVILLE AFTER A SNOWSTORM

hotels in town failed when the prices advanced so much, but two. They still keep open at $1.50 a meal.

Doctor Winston and Mr. McKenzie, next door neighbors, and engaged in the butcher business and one or two more of us have formed a mess. The Doctor has a negro boy he brought to this country who cooks. We call our hotel the Metropolitan and have lived first-rate at a cost of about $12 per week each. But one thing after another has disappeared from our table until, if you will analyze any dish, you will find it composed principally of beef. But we don't fall away any and the Doctor and I sing and chant by way of soup and smoke our pipes and tobacco for a dessert. We also have hot whisky toddy and brandy peaches for the evening while the class, as we term the five or six men who generally come in and sit with us of an evening, listen to the Doctor's discourse on scientific subjects. There are a few fine whole-souled men here who have travelled and are well informed on all subjects. The Doctor and McKenzie are from Jefferson City Missouri, and are an exception to the people from that State generally. Beckett from New York, has travelled all over Canada and England. Williams from New Orleans and Blanchard from Kentucky, are the Southern representatives. So we have all the different characters in the Union and there is a vast difference. We all have different pronunciations and use different words to express the same ideas. One is sensitive on some points which we in New England wouldn't notice, but we all agree that there are *gentlemen* from all parts.

I have met with all kinds of people and from my experience from what I have seen of Southern and Western character, I am not ashamed to hail from Yankee Land, but I am hardly ever taken for a Yankee. So I expect I have lost some of the characteristics or adopted some others. I can in nine cases out of ten name the State a

man is from after observing him a little. You know very little about the people that compose this vast Republic by travelling in New England.

We had the election returns some time ago, of course they would travel like all other bad tidings. Well, we expected to hear of the defeat of the Old General but thought he would run a better race than he did. If the counts are correct he got but four States. I think it an insult to him by the American people and if I were in his place I would emigrate and enlist under some other government where my services would be appreciated.

It is hardly necessary to write Father as you can tell him all the news. We intend to remain here until the beef gives out. We have enough to last about two weeks, and then travel out on snow shoes always providing it does not clear off and some provisions come in, which is most likely.

WEAVERVILLE, *January* 18, 1853

For the past two months we have had scarcely any communication with the lower country. The whole valley has been overflowed and the mountains covered with snow. We have had a winter such as you generally have, but the snow is gone now and the streams are down.

Provisions are still very high, but will soon go down. I am selling flour, sugar, salt, beans and rice for *one dollar per lb.* I have five mules packing from Shasta and have been doing very well, but some part of the time we have been entirely out. For one week we had nothing in town but barley. Saturday a drove of cattle arrived and they sold out six in one day at 40¢ per lb.

At Yreka, 125 miles north, things are worse than here. Salt is $10 a pound; no flour at any price; nothing but venison. This will injure this part of the country. A great many of the people have left but we are about as

YREKA

well off as any part of the county. Sacramento has been overflowed again and provisions all over the mines are high. If the weather holds good we shall soon have a full supply.

Cole is still in Sacramento. He and Sarah are in good health and will come up as soon as they can. He started twice but could not get here as Sarah could not swim.

I heard by your letter of October of the death of Kirk for the first time. He anticipated great pleasure in going home and seeing your family and wished me to go at the same time, but we little think of dying while talking over these matters. In fact, we think less of it in this country where we are continually popping off, than at home. I felt sad when I heard of the death of poor Kirk. I enjoyed his company when I was with him very much because we could talk about Bucksport, and I had expected to see him at home some time and talk about California, with you. But our plans are easily upset here by an overruling Power, Who doeth all things well.

It's no use for me to try and write seriously about these matters. We have no pious minister to talk and improve these providences to us as you have; no churches to go to on Sunday, and sit and reflect over the past week. Sunday, if observed at all, is a holiday. Business and pleasure are all the topics. I often think how it will seem to me to go home and go to church and keep Sunday as we used to keep it at home.

Well, we have had some sensible pleasure here. On New Year's eve we had a ball. I was one of the managers. We endeavored to get it up in good shape; so elected the best men for managers and invited only *respectable ladies* (you have to cull them out here). We found thirty two in town and vicinity and had twenty four at the ball. It went off first-rate. I was afraid there would be a row of

some kind but every one behaved themselves with propriety and enjoyed it much.

Clothes were in great demand and it was fun to see men whom we had always seen in a red shirt, sporting a dress coat and white vest. I was introduced to all the ladies. They were all married but three, but their husbands were very obliging and we all danced. Every one dances in this country and a party would be a dry one without it. Most of the ladies were young, just married and come out here and were glad of this chance to get acquainted with each other. One, Mrs. Carr from Wisconsin, is very ladylike and genteel and has evidently moved in the first circles. Mrs. Harper put on more airs than anyone. She waltzes rather better than I would want my wife to. Some of them were rotten, on the backwoods order, but I found a much better sample of ladies than I expected to up here.

Weaverville has had much the appearance of a quiet country village lately. McGee, the great shooting character, has left town and we have not had a shot fired for a month. Gambling is dull, the miners having as much as they can do to buy something to eat. Checkers and backgammon are more in play than monte and faro.

John Chinaman (frequently multiplied) is one of my best customers. There are thirty or forty of them and today they have come to town in force. One of them wrote me a sign in Chinese.

WEAVERVILLE, *March* 18, 1853

I wrote you a long letter to go by the last mail but the day before the mail was to leave this place, it was about half burnt up and the Post Office, mail, etc., with the rest. It was only a little fire for this country — about 20 or 30 buildings and $100,000 worth of property all out in one hour! We saved our side of the street with some difficulty

by hanging wet blankets on our stores and pulled down some buildings and let the rest burn. It will soon be built up again.

Cole is packing between here and Shasta. Sarah has gotten as far as Shasta and may be out this trip. We have bought a train of 14 mules and shall do our own packing in the future. This will save us a great deal of expense.

Cole says he saw Sewall in Sacramento, broke. Which means he hadn't 'nary a red.' He has not written me for a long time.

Our business is fair and increasing and if the mines pay well we shall come out ditto, as last winter I was obliged to trust a good deal and in spite of all my precautions we have $1800 credited, but I think most of it is good. The law in this country is good for collecting debts. I have several times been obliged to sue in this country until I have gotten to be quite a lawyer. I have never lost a case yet. I made out the papers today and saved $85 by sueing a note that I have.

I am getting tired of this kind of life and have fully made up my mind that when I do leave I will go into a civilized community for a short time at least, and, by the way, in order to civilize our town we want a school marm. There are ten or fifteen children running about the streets, growing up perfectly savage and their parents would be glad to pay some one well to train them. I have told several that where I come from the market is stocked with school mistresses and that I would write and order one immediately. Now, if you know of anyone (a young girl preferred, of course) who wants to make her board and one hundred dollars per month, here is a splendid opening — great chances to marry, too. Now, without joking, the parents here do want one very much and there are lots of little Diggers, bright little boys, owned by men who would be ready to send them if there was an op-

portunity. You ought also, when you are giving money to send missionaries to the Kanakas and the Africans, remember that we are here without any religion, no Sunday, no church, no minister — with a dozen families of children growing up ignorant of anything but Monte and learning to swear. Truly we are a curious state of society and the millennium seems far off.

I think some of going down below in a month or two.

It seems a long time since I left New York and longer to look ahead to the time when I shall be able to go back. I sometimes think I will settle down here for life and then I have a letter from Pond or someone else, describing his voyage to Valparaiso, the fine times he had, the beautiful Senoritas, and I get homesick and discontented and think I will abandon everything and fly to some other country where I can live. But then, it takes money to do all these things and I go on weighing out butter and sugar, etc., taking care to give exact weight on the butter and down weight on the gold dust and wishing that I was as sharp as Cobb used to be when I was in his store. If I only had H. D. Brookman's character I would get rich here in two years, but I have no faculty for making money. I should make a splendid Consul or Minister to some foreign country.

Well, I think if I were talking to you you would say 'dry up.' I'll do it.

March 19th

P.S. Received a letter from you last night, dated January 30th. Contents noted.

If you attend the Lyceum hand in the following questions for discussion:

First: 'Is a bat a bird?'

Second: 'Does not whisky preserve some men while it kills off others?' Instance: 'Old Sam' of Weaverville.

Third: 'Is sluicing preferable to drifting where it is twenty feet to the bed rock?'

These questions we have discussed without coming to any just conclusion and agreed last night to refer them to the Bucksport Lyceum. Please answer by return mail.

I have been reading 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' It is a thorough abolition story and will not find much favor here as a large proportion are from slave States and would kill an abolitionist at sight. 'Dave,' our cook, is a slave and has no desire to leave the Doctor. Calls me 'Massa Buck.' In fact the slaves in this state are a great deal better off than the free niggers and lots of them stick by their masters. I am greatly in favor of owning a plantation and about one hundred slaves, although opposed to the extension of slavery.

Another book is 'The Secret Memoirs of the Empress Josephine' by Mlle. Le Normand. It is very interesting. I find in it our family name mentioned: a 'General Buck' was arrested in Paris for conspiring against the Emperor and executed. He was on the wrong side.

Our fine hotel, the Metropolitan, was burnt, but we have opened in a nice building. We have added there to the class and thousands are striving to get a seat at our table. We now number twelve. Had eggs today (I strongly suspect that Fraser watches our neighbors hens) and are decidedly the aristocracy of Weaverville. One of them is

Your affectionate brother,
WILKINS MICAWBER

WEAVERVILLE, *April* 23, 1853

The spirit has not moved me to write for some time. I believe not since Sarah came up here. She has at last gotten settled down in very good lodgings for this country, over our store. She has been here about a month and I have gotten pretty well posted up on affairs down east. She reminds me very much of Mother and thinks, like

her, that the chief end of Woman is to sweep and wash and is in Heaven if she has plenty of wood and water. I am not so engaged but, what with the assistance of a Digger, I can keep her supplied. She knew me at sight and she has not changed. So all hopes of my coming home and not being recognized are vain. 'Twould be so *tragical*, you know, if I could some day step into your house, inquire after your brother whom I had met with in California or Tahiti, etc., and finally a grand tableau, brother and Sister rush into each other arms, curtain falls!

Our city is growing and filling up with people fast. Within the last month, over 500 Chinamen and as many Americans have arrived here and the cry is 'Lice! Lice!' (rice). They prefer it to flour and we can't keep enough on hand. It sells 3 lbs for a dollar, flour, 4 lbs. We are doing a good business, own a mule train and the store we occupy; so our expenses are light and I hope at last 'Something has turned up.' Business below is dull and goods cheap. This is all the better for us as we get just as good prices as when they are high.

For amusement we have had a cock fight and two horse races lately and the grand ball of the season comes off Monday night at the new Union Hotel. Ladies are expected from Shasta and all along the road and we have twenty five in town. Sarah declines to go. Besides this, we have a 'Medium' in town. Last night we made up a private party to test his spiritual arts. We sat around a table for some time and he called on the spirits to manifest themselves by tipping the table. This was done. The table was moved to all sorts of ways; tipped over entirely and finally tipped toward a man by the name of Jones. His guardian spirit was up and answered all his questions correctly. It was the spirit of his sister. Upon his asking the question the name was spelt — 'Mary Ann.' The year she died, her age, the number of his brothers and

sisters, etc. None of the rest of us had guardian spirits round, as we could not get a sign. This is all very strange but he accounts for it on the principle of electricity and magnetism. I think it is the same thing as mesmerism. I believe the raps and moving of the table is produced by some material cause. I don't believe that the departed spirits have anything to do with it. I have never believed in anything supernatural but I may be convinced hereafter. The experiments last night may be all accounted for by natural causes and mesmerism. Even if one believed the whole thing I see nothing to make one crazy, as I see numbers are in the States.

I think next month of going to San Francisco. Heretofore, I have remained here constantly and Cole goes with the train. I think of taking a turn at packing again. 'The British army swore dreadfully in Flanders' but nothing to what packers do in that line in California. On account of its tendency to profanity I dislike the business.

Sarah has written a host of letters and I supposed has described her situation. Maybe she does not like it but she does not complain. I have lived so long in this half-civilized State that I don't miss the little 'fixins' you have at home, and think perhaps that I have all the comforts of life about me when in reality I lack many things, but 'where ignorance is bliss, etc.'

WEAVERVILLE, *June* 5, 1853

I forget the date of my last letter but believe that it is time to say something and keep you posted up in our affairs. We are a great and growing people here and I am proud to be able to state to you that Weaverville is going ahead, also the firm known as Buck & Cole. Their affairs are in a healthy condition. County scrip has gone up for one and the other had a store full of goods and good credit.

All traces of the fire have vanished and the old log

cabins have been replaced by elegant buildings. We have now been here one year and during this time the town has doubled in size. We now have fourteen stores, four hotels and four gambling saloons in full blast.

Last Sunday we had a cock-fight; today, three horse-races for three hundred dollars a side. I am sorry to have to record these last but you ought to know it all and to brighten the picture I will state that fighting has diminished and our efficient officers arrest the offenders at once and make them come down to the tune of twenty dollars and costs. Our jail is in a fair way, also, to open on the 20th.

Speaking of jails, Col. Harper, who left here a short time since, ostensibly to go after his wife, robbed a woman in the stage going down, of $1800, and is at present in jail at Hamilton awaiting his trial. This rather took us aback although we all believed him to be a scoundrel. His wife is said to be with him. There must be some kind of a compact between such persons that I can't understand. He knows she has 'the act of shame a thousand times committed' and as to his guilt there is proof positive, and yet they stick to each other and theirs is not the only instance of the kind that I know of.

Sarah has made and received a number of calls on the ladies here. She will probably give you an account of them better than I can. We are living en famille. The Metropolitan has closed. Two of the old Mess board with us. Sarah does very well in housekeeping, but what is the use of having a woman unless she can cook?

You spoke of the Chinese in your last letter. We have lots of them about and they are among our best customers and certainly the best foreigners we have. They buy lots of provisions, chiefly rice, flour, lard, codfish, tea, etc; drink whisky and smoke like other people. I rode down to the river yesterday. There are three hundred of them

on one bar that has been worked out by our people and they are perfectly satisfied if they make two or three dollars per day.

Besides these we have all nations and here, while I write, I can hear Dutch, French, Spanish, English and that rich Irish brogue (I hate the whole Irish race), all at once.

You who live under the Maine Liquor law can have no idea of the immense quantity of liquor consumed in one of these mining towns. There are fourteen bar rooms in this little town and I only wonder that there is not more drunkenness than there is. Although we all drink, the 'getting drunk' is done by very few and no man of any standing in the town ever thinks of doing such a thing.

SAN FRANCISCO, *July 12th*, 1853

Excuse the exuberance of my pen in this letter and attribute all the faults to my being in this city for the first time since I left it 14 months ago and meeting with all my old friends: Hock and Soda, etc., etc. You can imagine the rest.

I came down a delegate to the Whig State Convention from Trinity County. Stopped a day with Lindley at Marysville and two days in Sacramento. We have put our best man (Captain Waldi) out for Governor and are of course sanguine of beating the Bight clique. Saw men from all the thirty five counties in the state in the convention and after due consideration, I pronounce the Whig Party here to be the salt of the earth; composed of the finest men in the state.

Came down here Friday night. Have been with Sewall every day. He has been to Oregon. At present is doing nothing — has not made up his mind what to do and I don't know what advice to give him. I have seen so little of him that he seems almost a stranger to me and his

acquaintances and mine are altogether different men. We appear to move in different circles. He knows nobody whom I know. Sewall is stout and healthy but he seems to be adverse to doing anything and each time I have found him he has been doing nothing. This won't do in this country. A man is on expense and if not going ahead is going back. I shall talk with him some more before I leave and try and get him a situation in a store here.

I find a year makes great changes here. Several of my old friends are missing — dead — and gone to other parts of the world.

Marysville has grown rapidly and is twice as big as when I left it. On the contrary, Sacramento has gone back and is now but a wreck of what it was. Fires and floods have almost blotted it out but it is again going ahead and in another year will perhaps get back again.

This city is *the city* of the *Pacific* — crowded with people of all nations and the buildings will vie with those of New York. Everything: hotels, theatres, saloons, carriages and horses, men and women, are on a scale with any city in the States. Of course I am having a fine time. I always have here. This is my vacation and I let myself out loose you would think at home, probably, but don't be alarmed I have a well-balanced mind; reason is always on her throne. I like to have a good time as well as anybody but in a decent genteel way, of course.

I sent my train of mules to Colusa and shall buy enough goods to load them there and go up Wednesday and once more return to the shades of private life as a *Country Merchant*, not considered as honorable an occupation as an 'honest miner' but I like it better.

Write often, hermana mia. Adios. Hasta la tarde.

WEAVERVILLE, *July* 26, 1853

I wrote you from San Francisco and expected to find

THE FIRE IN SACRAMENTO, NOVEMBER, 1852

letters from you here but our mail is very irregular now. You may have written and the letters not arrived. It is a very long time since I heard from you.

As near as I can recollect, I remained in San Francisco six days; escorted a French lady to Weaverville, Madame De Borde. As all her expenses were paid by her friend in S.F. I had no objection to taking charge of her. Madame had never been out of San Francisco and all the English she knew was 'Yes Sir' and 'Thank you, Sir.' My knowledge of French is very limited but we talked all the way. It is astonishing how soon you can learn a foreign tongue from a pretty pair of lips. I have paid a good deal of attention to Spanish and can read and speak it with ease. It is used a great deal in this country. Our packers are Mexicans, nearly altogether. And 'Juanita' does up my shirts and very well, too.

The fourth of July I was travelling. It was celebrated with a general drunk early in the morning, kept up at short intervals during the day and at night a grand ball in the new Court House. The first ball not being satisfactory to some, they had another the night following. Talk about our grandmothers, etc., in early times riding to parties and meetings — four ladies came over from Shasta, 40 miles, on mules, Saturday and Sunday. Monday they ran all over town, calling. At night they danced, ate and drank till two o'clock. The next day the same and dancing all night. They started home at daylight and rode 40 miles over the worst mountains you ever did see (in pictures).

I send you a view of our village which is pretty good. The mountains are not right, the valley being much larger than represented. Business is dull. Weather very hot. Snow is in great demand but the supply holds out and we enjoy cobblers, ice creams, etc. Our train came up from Colusa in nine days. Both men gave out with the

fever and ague and Cole and Fagg have gone down this morning to turn the mules out. While waiting at Colusa they lost our best mule and my Colt's 'Revolver' (lost $200), stolen by a dmd Dutchman.

Colusa is a beautiful place. Fine chance to go in swimming and abounds in Digger Indians and fleas. The dust and heat at this season of the year in the valley render it anything but pleasant to travel and one is glad to leave the plains and get into the mountains, where we have cool water and cool nights. I was five days coming up and every time that I come back I think we are farther out of the world than ever. I believe I shall not go down again until I leave for good. Weaverville, however, is a very pleasant place to live. I prefer it to any place short of San Francisco. I have made a great many pleasant acquaintances here and besides it is better to be a great man in a small place than nobody in a great city. We are settled down here and can't wind up our business in a short time. We live first-rate and I sometimes think I might as well get married and stay here. Mrs. Finley showed me a great chance in Marysville, a Miss May — very pretty but no *dimes*. Won't do. At Red Bluffs I saw the prettiest Mexican girl I have ever seen in the county. She is genuine Castillian, owns a train of mules and buys and loads them. We bought the flour she sent to Weaverville. I had a strong idea of offering myself and train, against her and her train, but Angelita told me she had a husband somewhere in the mines and she has a boy about five years old. So I didn't ask her.

WEAVERVILLE, *August* 20, 1853

We often talk about the family and Bucksport in our family circle, which consists of Cole and wife, Feast, Fagg and myself, and contrast our mode of life with that of yours. We generally come to the conclusion that we live

faster and better here. In the line of *melons* at this time we certainly lay over you. Watermelons that weigh from 30 to 40 lbs. and mushmelons in every variety. We devour from 4 to 6 per day, and mixed with beef, mutton and vegetables of all kinds. We are growing fat and enjoy perfect health.

Sarah and a number of the other ladies are engaged in a Sunday School. Our Court House and jail are finished and the morals of the place visibly improving.

Business is very dull and local news scarce. So much so that our correspondent of the Shasta Courier has suspended operations.

I heard from Howard Buck today. He is in a streak of luck this summer. He makes in his claim on the East Fork an average of $20 per day. On Cañon Creek rich diggings have been struck, also close to town in the top of a hill, $10 to the pan. When the canal now under construction, from Trinity River, is completed there will be 500 tons of water to work with which will give employment to several thousand men. At present water is very scarce. One ton head rents for $16 per week. This canal will be 28 miles long and cost $250,000, but there is no doubt but what the stock will pay 20% per month. As there are extensive diggings which cannot be worked for want of water, California is not worked out yet and the yield of gold about this place is much larger than last year. Next year I think the whole Trinity river will be flumed. A new road is to be put through from this place to Red Bluffs direct, shortening the distance twenty miles. Red Bluffs is at the head of navigation on the Sacramento and the place where we buy all our goods — distance 80 miles from this place.

So you see we are developing the country, spreading ourselves generally. Perhaps you had not better come out yet.

I have just taken a walk through town, visited all the saloons. It is Saturday night and they are crowded. We have four in operation, all carried on by French and Dutch. At present the Diana has a fine band of music but nothing of interest going on. They are a kind of Exchange for the miners to meet at and take a drink and play euchre and dance with the girls. Gambling is a small business, few bets exceeding a quarter. Sich is life in Weaverville.

Good night. Parting is such... etc.

WEAVERVILLE, *September* 18, 1853

You appear to be very much afraid of the Small Pox. I hope you won't get it and lose your beauty, but it is not so much to be dreaded as you imagine. We have it here in some part of the State all the time and no one notices it. It is taking off the poor kanakas at the Sandwich Islands at an awful rate and it is thought that the cholera will just clean them all out. It is strange that wherever the American people settle, the natives, be they Indians, Kanakas or Spaniards, gradually melt away; and I firmly believe in the doctrine of *manifest destiny*, that we shall yet overrun the whole continent and spread out on the Islands and into Asia.

Our success in business stopped about the 1st of July. Since that time we have done scarcely nothing. The water dried up and business has been poor. No money and the hardest kind of work to collect debts. With a great many I am afraid we never shall collect. We have a Celestial for a clerk and he is very successful in trading with his countrymen. These Chinese are the greatest traders in the world. They lay over the genuine Yankee even in buying and selling. All of them appear to be well educated in their language and can calculate how much a bill of goods comes to in their heads quicker than I can.

'Ahyung,' who is with us, speaks good English and is very industrious. They are first-rate cooks. I wish you had one for a servant.

It has rained every month this year and lately we have had heavy rains and thunder showers frequently. The rivers and creeks have risen from four to six feet, to the great damage of the miners at work fluming them. Since I wrote you the community here has been very quiet. We have had our election and been beaten by the great unwashed Democracy, of course, although it is still doubtful whether Bigler or Waldo is governor. But here in our own County the Democratic ticket has all been elected. If ever I entended to figure in political affairs or wanted office I should have come out a Democrat long since. They stick to their party and vote the regular ticket no matter if the Devil himself heads it. They never bolt. The Whig Party, besides being in a minority, split up and vote for all their friends. There never will be another such a chance to elect a Whig governor again but it shows what a state of discipline the Democratic Party is in in this State.

The landlord of the Miners Hotel struck a man on the head with a club, from the effects of which he died that night. The man was drunk and disorderly. The Sheriff arrested a gambler. While conveying him to his office he drew a bowie knife and got away. The Sheriff drew a revolver and ordered him to surrender. He refused and he shot him through the heart and all the people cried Amen. This is all the remarkable events that have transpired in Weaverville lately.

Write me all about the distinguished strangers who are now visiting Bucksport. I hope you may have a gay season, equal to Saratoga or Newport. I sat for my daguerreotype today and will send it to you the first opportunity, or by express.

WEAVERVILLE, *December* 31, 1853

A few hours yet remain of this year — not a very eventful one to me. But I recollect at home we used to square up accounts, examine into our affairs and see how we stood. The Minister also improved the opportunity by recalling all the events and advising us to look back and see our sins and try and do better next time.

The most remarkable event to me, for the past year, has been my stopping in one place for one whole year. Tonight finds me in the same house and I am inclined to think if we had everything in money, our debts all paid, we should not be much better off than a year ago. I have just made a good living — all I ever expect to do, but what more does a man want? Sarah's arrival has given us a home and mince pies, and doughnuts. It's pleasant to have a woman around, although Sarah is not the kind I fancy. She hasn't got spirit enough. She is too good.

I have been to San Francisco once. Saw all my friends. Had a good time though nothing remarkable occurred. Have been to Red Bluffs and Shasta frequently and gained a good deal of experience in the science of packing. For the past two months I have lived on the road, but the Indians and the romance of travelling have disappeared. We have good hotels and at all of them woman's smiles to enliven the supper table and turn out the tea (I mean the woman). In fact, I have no remarkable adventures nor hair-breadth escapes to relate to you and the local events and changes about town would not interest you.

'Madam La Marquise' has levanted with her bar keeper. Made some $3000 at Lansquenet, built a splendid saloon, opened and flourished for about two months but couldn't make the riffle, etc. Couldn't pay for it so she gathered all the loose change about the house and left, leaving her husband to settle up the best way he

could. I could write a book on this kind of events and town gossip but you would not care for it.

We have had several balls, suppers, etc., and Christmas was celebrated in the good old style, viz: by the whole town getting drunk. We had egg nogg and Tom and Jerry. This reduced the temperate and whisky punches followed.

Your criticism on my daguerreotype requires a passing notice here. However repulsive it may appear to you I think it a good likeness and I flatter myself that there are worse looking men, at least there are here. My friends say it looks rather older than the original. Sarah says more care worn. Perhaps I can give you a better description. I am five feet eleven, weigh 175 lbs., well-proportioned, perfectly straight with a graceful and dignified carriage. You may remember that I was overgrown and awkward but at the last ball, as I was dancing with the belle of the saloon 'Madame Chabord,' I trod on her flounce and ripped her skirt about half way round the waist, I overheard one fellow say to another: 'Why Buck is much lighter than I imagined a man of his size to be. He handles himself very gracefully on the floor.' So you see I have gotten over that failing of my youth. But in my own opinion, I appear to better advantage on horseback than in the mazes of the cotillion. Everybody says I should make a splendid cavalry officer, a kind of a *Murat*. I always had a fancy for the military line. Circumstances may give me a chance yet, but at present I command nothing higher than a train of mules. My hair and whiskers are a dark red (horrid, isn't it?) but they become my complexion. Father rather insinuates I color them. Perish the thought! I am perfectly satisfied with what nature has done for me. Wouldn't change a hair. Now what do you think of the picture? It is fortunate that ladies are scarce here and what there is are

well guarded, for there is no knowing the extent of mischief that I should be the innocent cause of.

I have nothing to present you with but a few flower seeds, which accompany this. They are the mountain flowers. I wish I could have gotten some from the valley as the prairie flowers are much larger and handsomer. Feast has sorted them and put on the botanical names, which it is supposed all sentimental ladies understand. With these accept the compliments of the season. A Merry Christmas and many happy New Years to you and all the family.

WEAVERVILLE, *February* 19, 1854

We have made nothing this winter and no prospect of anything ahead here. The town does not grow, on the contrary rather goes back. The fact is, it was large enough when we first came here, but people here overdo anything but work. They take good care not to dig too much and if by chance they make a raise of $1000 or so by mining, leave off and go to trading.

As to the dignity of labor here, that is all gone. Loafing is much more respectable. About one half of the people here work. The other half live off of them. Which state of things makes our respective shares small. Hence we etc, etc, etc. I could explain it to you perfectly clearly if I had paper, pens and ink enough. But I haven't that. This is a poor place to make anything but a living, not a merchant here has made anything. The 1st of January we had $3000 debts outstanding. L. & M., another firm here, have $10,000. This is where our profits go.

I shall have stayed two years the first of June and by that time I hope to be all clear of this place. I have only made a living here for two years and I can do that anywhere. You see that I am pretty well disgusted with this place. Trade is perfectly stagnant. We have been sitting

still all winter. I have tried to find a claim to mine but there has been no water to mine with. Everybody in this land of gold is flat broke.

WEAVERVILLE, *May* 22, 1854

I received a letter from you last mail. I forget the date but you wrote of snow storms so suppose it was in April or somewhere about that time. Our snow has been at a distance for some time, but the warm weather for the past week has brought it into town and it is fed out in the shape of cocktails, juleps, etc., to the thirsty multitude.

Our village is very lively now and has improved this Spring. The lower part is all occupied by Chinese. They have four stores, four gambling saloons and a restaurant. They bid fair to outnumber the Americans in a short time. There are probably 1000 in town and in the vicinity, also four women. One of them has a Celestial baby, the first Chinese child I ever saw. Some of these China gamblers and merchants have plenty of money and actually lay over us a long way in fine clothes and high living. They eat chickens and eggs, two articles that are eaten only by the aristocracy here, for at a restaurant two eggs are furnished for $1.25. You can imagine what it would cost me for a dinner at this rate.

They have rented the Golden Gate Saloon and have seventeen gambling tables in one room. They have no bar but a side table with tea and paper cigars. The game I cannot describe very well, but it is played with coins one of which I enclose. A lot of these are shuffled together and then covered with a tin cover. After the bets are made the cover is removed and the checks counted out by fours, and the game appears to be odd and even. When these tables are surrounded by two or three hundred Chinamen, all talking at once, the noise is equal to that made by a cotton mill in full blast. They are fast becoming a

nuisance. Several of them are in jail for stealing, etc., and if it were not for the sums collected from them for mining, four dollars per month, which helps the county officers out, they would not be allowed to stay among us, I think.

I think if you were to go oftener to the theatre you would see things in a different light. You would soon begin to look at the merits of the artiste instead of entering into the spirit of the play and thinking it all reality, or on the contrary, looking at it as a sham. The plot of a play, as you say, is generally foolish. The picture is too high drawn, generally, to be the 'mirror of nature,' but it is the manner the actor or actress delineates the character that one ought to look at. The charm of the stage to me is the actors on it. They make the play interesting or dull. It is not so much the words but the persons and actions of those that speak them. I except Shakespeare of course. There, the language is grand and beautiful of itself.

In the Sandwich Islands the natives are decreasing fast, 5000 within the past year. In ten years it is estimated there will not be a Kanaka left. I don't know what to think about missionary enterprises among these savages. I am satisfied they cannot be made Christians until they are civilized and by the time the whites live among them and get them civilized they will be all gone. The Sandwich Islands, about which so much has been written of the success of the missionaries, don't seem to be bettered much after all.

Write all the gossip you can get hold of, to this end, attend all the parties and keep your eye peeled.

WEAVERVILLE, *June* 29, 1854

We are now in the full bloom of summer, with all sorts of garden sauce and fresh butter to eat, and at this season of the year the country is delightful.

I believe I have not said anything about the theatre to

you yet. Now, some people at home think the theatre a very wicked institution but here it seems different. We have no good place to spend our evenings and the theatre is certainly the most moral and the cheapest place to spend an evening here, at present. On the stage we see, to some extent, the world we used to live in, acted out. We have singing and dancing, jealous wives and tender lovers, aristocratic ladies and servant girls — all pass before our eyes and for the time we yield ourselves up to the delusion and live over again the scenes of the past, and then the next day we have lots to talk about. We criticise the performance and everybody is whistling a new song and getting a bouquet for the chorus and wild flowers to throw at Miss Williamson, the pretty danseuse. If they can only get one smile they are happy for a week. It is a perfect oasis in the desert, I assure you, this theatre. The company is a very good one. The house will hold about five hundred and is jammed full three nights in the week. Mr. Paulson is really a good actor and we have all signed an invitation for him to accept a benefit on the third of July, when he is to give us a Tragedy.

Since I wrote we have had the first temperance lecture delivered in town. Miss Pellet has been here. She came in town Sunday and lectured in front of the hotel. When she took her stand on a dry goods box and commenced talking everybody ran. The saloons and stores were deserted. No dog fight ever drew together such a crowd. Perhaps you have seen Miss Pellet, as she hails from Maine. She is not bad looking, dresses in the Quaker style, has a fine voice and a great flow of language. Did I say flow? It is a perfect torrent. She talked for an hour and never stopped to draw breath. The noon arrived. We drew a long breath when she got through and thanked our stars we were not tied to her for life.

In the evening she took the theatre and spoke for two

hours, all on temperance. At the close a collection was taken up to defray her expenses. She got seventy one dollars — pretty good days work. As she is travelling all over the country at this rate she must have a pretty good thing. Great country for women, isn't it? What an opening this state presents for a woman of genius... while we poor men have to work at least three days in the week to get a living.

I believe it is a great event at home to have a new minister. Well, we have a young man among us who says he was sent here by the Methodist Conference and that he is a preacher. He preaches in the Court House twice Sundays and is a very pleasant young man though not much of a sermonist. He has quite a large audience and will remain for a year. A paper was taken around town and $200 a month was subscribed to support the Gospel — $2400 a year. How much do you give your minister? How I would like to ask you and Father and the Congregational Church generally, why it is that no minister of that denomination ever finds his way here? There is not one in the State north of Marysville, while the Methodist are sending theirs into every mining town, steadily gaining every year. I know that more than one half of the people here have been in the habit of attending this and the Presbyterian Church and would give two dollars when they give one, if we had an educated minister. While you are sending out men to preach to the Hindoos and the Hottentots (?) you are forgetting this country settled with your own sons and daughters, where a minister could be well supported and a Church built at once. At the next monthly concert I wish you would ask a report from the northern part of California.

WEAVERVILLE, *July* 18, 1854

Previous to the 1st inst. I have nothing of importance

to write about, but during the past 17 days events enough have occurred here to fill a volume. We have had first the fourth of July, the Whig and Democratic conventions, the District Court, the Chinese War and other things too numerous to mention.

We celebrated the 4th in old fashioned style. Mr. Trevis read the Declaration of Independence and gave us a first-rate oration and we had the usual amount of fire crackers and fire works in the evening. The French people dressed up their house, 'Diana Saloon,' in fine style. In the evening it was splendidly illuminated. Music and dancing was the order of the night and after drinking a few bottles of soda, we were fain to cry out with a loud voice. Great is Diana of the Frenchmen.·

The convention followed close on the heels of the fourth. We held ours in the Bella Union Saloon. Every candidate as he was nominated made a speech accepting the honor and called for champagne by the basket. The convention would then take a recess for ten minutes. It was very hot. Champagne and ice is a beautiful drink and after nominating about four candidates it was thought best to adjourn and, in fact, it was high time. It cost each candidate about $100 and a man has to spend at least $500 to be elected to any office in the State. I wish you to understand that I am not a candidate, but the great feature of news, as the newspapers say, is the war between two parties of Chinese.

The whole country has been thrown into a perfect cold sweat by the excitement. All the blacksmiths have been busy making weapons. The tinman sold all his tin and sheet iron for shields. We sold all our hatchets and powder and everybody came from far and near to see the battle. Now the cause of this war I have in vain tried to find out. Some say one party is the imperial and the other the rebel, the same as in China. Each party claims

to be Canton men and each call the other Hongkong men, 'no good.' Another is that it arose about six bits at a gambling table. Now you know just as much as I do about it. One party was dressed in red, had red cloth around their heads and a white banner with the inscription 'Yangwa Company' on it. The other party had sheet iron hats like a tunnel and had a red and black flag with 'Canton City Company' on it. They were armed with long pikes, fifteen feet long, with red streamers. Some had three prong spears. Some swords five feet long set in a handle six feet long, and an awful two handed weapon it was, too. It beat the claymore of William Wallace. The front rank had shields and short swords, exactly like those used by the knights of old.

On Tuesday the Red Cap party paraded in the street. They numbered one hundred and ten. They charged up and down the street with hideous yells. The parade was made more interesting by the appearance of one of our citizens, Sites, mounted on a fire horse in full regimentals. Sites says he was offered $500 to fight for them but wanted a thousand.

On Friday both parties encamped within one mile of each other, about a mile from town. On Saturday the fight was to come off and on that day there must have been nearly two thousand persons on the ground. In the morning I visited the camp of the Canton men. They mustered two hundred and fifty warriors. I wish I could write like Headly to describe the scene to you as it really looked. Imagine that number of Chinamen armed with long spears with sheet iron helmets and tin shields, enormous squirt guns filled with some infernal liquid, gongs beating and horns blowing, marching out to battle. Now they would halt, with their poles upright, looking like a forest of trees. Then, lowering the points of their spears, with awful yells, they would run two or three

hundred yards. Then stop, the front rank dropping on one knee, forming a perfect rampart of spears and shields. Their movements elicited shouts of admiration from the outsiders and showed us the Chinese in a new character.

I then went up to the camp of the Red Caps, Hongkongs. They numbered one hundred and ten, but were the best looking party. They had no iron caps and no squirt guns but a great many had revolvers. They looked more intelligent, were larger men. All the Chinamen who lived in town, with the exception of two houses, belong to this party. Everybody seemed to think, although the other party outnumbered them two to one, that the Red Caps would clean them out. Charley, the Captain, told me that if they did not attack him from behind (outflank him), he would fight the whole party and he wanted the Americans to keep them in front.

The Sheriff now came on the ground to try to stop it, but people would not hear of it. 'One party was trying to oppress the other,' they said. 'The Chinamen have made extensive preparations. They want to fight. They (the people) had come a long way to see it. It was of no consequence if all the Chinese in the country got killed. So much the better. Fight they should.' And the Sheriff, who didn't care much about doing his duty when the whole sovereign people were against him, gave it up.

All these things lasted until three o'clock. When the Chinamen were close to town and we began to think they wouldn't fight after all, then the Red Caps charged the Cantons, with a courage and fury that perfectly astonished us. The Cantons were divided into three parties: one in front on the bank of a gulch, one in the rear and one on the left. The Red Caps were on one side of this gulch and the Cantons on the other. The leader of the Red Caps very deliberately rolled up the legs of his wide Chinese trousers to his thighs, struck his shield with his

sword, gave the word to charge and rushed across the gulch. They charged up the hill right on the spears of the Cantons. The leader of the Red Caps, covering his body with his shield, fought like a lion. The Cantons wavered, broke and ran. The party on the left started to come to the assistance of this party but were kept back by the Americans who, I am ashamed to say, threw stones and fired into them with their pistols, under the pretense of having a fair fight. This completed the defeat of the Cantons who retreated on to the other party in the rear. A man gets nervous under such circumstances and if he has a pistol in his hand he is mighty apt to shoot. In the melee one Dutchman, who we had seen fire at the Chinese, was shot through the head and killed instantly. No one pitied him.

The Chinese did some shooting. In all, forty or fifty shots were fired, I should think. The whole thing probably did not last more than two minutes, but it seemed an hour and when the smoke and dust of battle rolled away eight Chinamen and the Dutchman were killed, dead, and some six or eight wounded. Broken spears and shields strewed the ground. The Red Caps lost two, the Cantons six men. The savage character of these people was exhibited in their spearing the wounded. If a man fell wounded, a half a dozen would jump on and pin him to the ground with their spears. This is as bad as the Fiji Islanders. The Red Caps captured a flag and lots of weapons and a short time after the fight, both parties came into town and brought in the dead and wounded. The two physicians were in great demand and must have made a good fee out of the job as one party had six wounded. The people also dispersed, their curiousity pretty well satisfied that the Chinese will fight. The Cantons are very wroth that the Americans assisted the Hongkongs and I think with good reason. You will think

it strange that men will fight in a quarrel that they know nothing about. The hardened wretches we have among us, lots of them offered to hire to the Chinese for from one to five hundred dollars to fight for them, and besides, the sympathies are on the weaker side and there is a class of men here who, whenever there is a fight, no matter who between or what it is about, must pitch in and take a hand. The little Dutchman got his deserts and it is thought to be a great pity here that about a dozen more were not served the same.

Sunday the dead were buried. They were placed in coffins and the Chinamen followed them, two and two, with white badges of mourning, to the grave. As the procession moved along several Chinamen threw pieces of paper in the air with inscriptions on them. When they arrived at the grave they burned a great quantity of paper and bowed themselves and changed their badges from white to red. They placed at the foot of each coffin jars of rice and meat with tea cups turned over them. After the graves were filled up they bowed themselves again and all gave three hearty cheers. They all took green sprigs and marched around the graves and then home! There was a large crowd of us present and they passed around liquors and cigars to the company, something after the Irish fashion. The wounded are doing well and quiet is again restored in China.

I have not said anything about the morality of these proceedings, something like the gladiators of ancient Rome, I must confess. But if the Chinese wish to fight among themselves and kill each other the people here are perfectly willing. We thought that the whole thing would be a farce but their coolness and courage surprised us and the play turned into a tragedy at the close. It will last us to talk about for a long time.

I have been to Red Bluffs lately. It has grown to be

quite a place within the year past. The Spanish heiress 'Angelita,' whom I had some idea of making a proposition to, has married John Underhill, a merchant at the Bluffs. There goes $5000 cash and 26 mules.

We expect to subside into a state of quiescence now for some time. The water has dried up and business will be very dull for the next three months. Water melons and the election are all we expect. Now, if you have our city friends down East, you can write me as long a letter as this. I shall expect a full description of the guests, amusements, balls, etc., at that fashionable watering place.

WEAVERVILLE, *September* 19, 1854

I send you by this mail a specimen of our California literature. The author of the book is a good letter writer and quite a poet. A great many of the incidents in the book, I suspect, are romance but the greater part is fact. I lived at the ranch six miles from Marysville during the winter of '51 and '52 and no doubt saw the real Joaquin at the camp, three miles from the city, where I frequently went to fandangoes. But we had not heard of the name then: Buchanan. The Sheriff would have taken him at that time had he had some men to help him, but as it was his courage nearly proved fatal. The poor fellow hung between life and death a long time. From a young man now living near here (Horace Bell) who was one of Harry Lowe's rangers, I have heard a great deal of Joaquin. He ascribes the death of Gen. Bean to a cause that has killed a great many men, viz: a woman. Perhaps 'twas Joaquin's mistress! He was on his way to visit her at any rate when he was killed.

Bell was one of a party that took Joaquin's sister from a camp to Los Angeles in order to find out something of her brother, but he never visited her afterwards. Finally, it is doubted whether Joaquin is killed or not. There are

as many persons who are willing to swear that the head is not his, as the other way. But Harry Lowe got the $1000, and perhaps Joaquin is now living in Sonora with his darling Rosita. Quien sabe?

H. B. Davidson keeps a book and drug store right opposite ours. He went to San Francisco and came back the other day with a darling *Dolores*, one of the first families of Durango, he says. Every time I look across the street I feel like getting married myself and every time I hear her singing and playing the guitar I feel that I might just as well have one as he. I have two years more before I am thirty and during that time I may be fortunate or unfortunate enough to find a wife. If I don't I think it doubtful if I ever do find one.

WEAVERVILLE, *October* 10, 1854

The drought seems to affect you more than it does us. Here for months we do not have a cloud to obscure the sun. Everything dries up. All the gardens and potatoes have to be irrigated from streams, and finally these dry up. All the wood-work about our houses, especially pails, tuns, kegs, doors, roofs, and stoves even dry up and fall to pieces; but we think nothing of it. Our market is full to overflowing with potatoes and garden 'sass' and flour is only $12 per hundred in Weaver. Wheat is 3 cts per lb. in the valley. The mill at Red Bluffs makes 300 bbls. of flour per day, worth $14 per bbl. at the mill.

We live on the produce of Cal. now and from all the accounts from the old States the comforts of life are about as cheap and easily gotten here as there. We may have to send you some flour this winter, if the drought has injured the crop. You little thought in the States, I suppose, that in five years this mountainous, dried-up Golden State would raise her own potatoes and flour and have it to export. But we are fast here and such

is the fact. This country produces things on a large scale.

I think, at the end of the year, of settling up with Cole and going into something else. There is not enough business for two. If I do I will try and come home next Summer. Don't think I have forgotten my home and my parents and, most of all, *you*. I think more of coming home every day. I begin to think that if I do not come home soon we shall all be strangers and I shall not be interested, and the idea of finding you all grown old and staid, sober people I don't fancy at all.

(There's Davidson's wife looking out the window, right opposite. I wonder if he does not tell her to sit there to draw customers — or to make me feel badly?)

Remember me to Mother and Father. Tell Mother I will write a letter to her soon.

WEAVERVILLE, *November* 11, 1854

I received yours of September 27th last night and hasten to reply, as you see. I always feel in the mood for answering a letter after reading one.

I am glad to hear of Father's election. Wish he could go as Minister to the Court of St. James and I hope he will carry out the Know Nothing principle until the *Irish race* is utterly annihilated from these United States. The Chinese we can get along with. They don't want to be made citizens but the Irish have a great deal more to say about elections than we do. I was one of the judges at the polls here at the last election and we made every man who had an Irish name swear his vote in and the result was that we stopped about a hundred and fifty 'good American citizens,' but they couldn't swear it on the Holy Cross.

The gay season has opened in Weaverville, with what is always a great event here: *a ball*. Mrs. Edwards from

New Orleans took a great interest and made it as select and aristocratic as possible. The ladies drew the party lines strict and a great many heretofore in the habit of attending balls, found their heads cut off entirely.

There are about thirty ladies here of all sorts and after classifying them properly, eighteen were found righteous enough to attend. Outside appearances were more regarded I think, than real chastity in this selection. (Curious things, these women — aren't they?) However, everything went off in good style. The saloon was decorated. The supper was as good as you could *possibly* get up at home and the champagne and brandy punch perhaps you couldn't get, as good.

Dry goods have gotten to be plentiful here and the ladies were dressed much better than I ever saw them before and the gents wore white kids and we had an opportunity *once more* to circulate amidst silks, satins and that indescribable perfume that pervades these things always. I do assure you it was very refreshing to me and will keep me in good spirits for a month. We had a Spanish set, a French set and an American set, there being four ladies of each nation present. I am considerable of a Know Nothing but I rather took to the Spanish set, especially as Mrs. Davidson happens to be the prettiest specimen of the Mexican people I have ever seen. I wish you could see her waltz. You would have to acknowledge that the American women are thrown in the shade by the Mexican.

Well, we danced all night — till the broad daylight, last Thursday night and we have not talked of anything else since.

By the way, we are to have a newspaper published here. It will be started next week. I will send it to you of course. There is also a strong probability of our having a theatre.

Now, don't you think we are getting to be quite civilized here in the mountains in a town only two years old. I wish you lived here. I think I would get married and settle down, build a brick store and try and content myself, for I firmly believe that this town will continue to go ahead until it gets to be a city of ten thousand inhabitants and also that there will be a railroad from Shasta to San Francisco in less than five years. By that time the valleys that are now being made into farms will be able to raise all the produce we shall want, besides any quantity of fruit, grapes, etc., and the mines will be just as good as they are now.

There is a sort of freedom from restraint and a constant excitement, a getting up something new, that makes life very agreeable here, after all, and the days, weeks and months slip by rapidly.

Monday, November 13th

As there is no particular hurry about putting this in the office I thought I would write a little more — just to give you a hint to write to me on a larger sheet next time.

Miss Goodenow sang Saturday and Sunday night. Last night she had a crowd of five or six hundred, most of them hard-fisted, red-shirted miners who had not heard a woman sing since they left home. They sat with mouths open and drank in every word and brought her out every time. They would all pay a dollar just to look at her and she sang songs that pleased them very much. Such as: Sweet Home; Comin' thro the Rye; The Old Folks at Home, etc. Her voice appears to have failed. She can't touch a high note, but I like her style. I think she was taught by L. Mason from the way she opens her mouth and pronounces her words.

A fellow from Steubenville, Ohio, sat near me. He raised up in his seat when she commenced and hardly

breathed. When she finished he sank back perfectly exhausted and says: 'That's good. I like to see her throw her upper jaw back and let it come.' The remarks by the audience are as amusing to me as the performance. I wonder if she hails from Maine? She substituted the *Kennebec* for the Swannee River in the song.

The District Court is in session and a man will be sentenced to be hung tomorrow. He will probably have about thirty days allowed him to make his peace with God. The Presiding Elder, Mr. Arnold, preached yesterday afternoon in the street in front of the Diana Saloon. The audience would have been considered a motly one at home — consisting of men of all nations, including Chinese, Diggers and pack mules. He took for his text the whole Book of Jonah and likened himself unto Jonah and Weaverville unto Nineveh. Not a bad comparison except that he has never been swallowed by a fish and Weaver is not quite so large as Nineveh was. He told us that he had travelled and had visited a great many places and never had seen a place where wickedness of all kinds stalked abroad as it did here and exhorted us to repent before the besom of destruction should sweep us away. He preached more sensibly and to the point than any minister I have heard in California. He has a fine voice and sang the old Methodist tunes with great unction. I hope it may have a good effect for he told us some plain truths in a plain way.

If he thinks the town such a wicked place now I wonder what he would have thought two years ago. We have been congratulating ourselves that we have reformed and got to be a decent people, but our standards of morality as compared with towns at home, I expect, is very low.

WEAVERVILLE, *March* 19, 1855

I have been waiting since the first of January for some-

thing to write to you. Last night there was an Irishman killed in a house close by and I thought it was time to inform you of what was going on.

Cole has gone to San Francisco and I am in the store. I have been mining for the past month, about two miles below town and have only been in town Sundays. I have gone back to first principles again. There are five of us living together. We have built a large log house with a splendid fire place and live the free and easy life of California miners. The claim has not paid much yet. In four days last week we made fifty one dollars, but we hope for better things when we get farther into the hill.

I am tired of *store keeping* where there is not business enough to keep me employed half the time and feel much better contented to be at work. Most men who have been here since '49 and have at some former time worked at mining find it very hard to go back to the old style of life: a cabin, cooking, etc., but I enjoy it yet. I very soon got accustomed to the pick and shovel again and if you can only make a dollar or two a day over expenses, it is such an independent life: paid in hard cash every night, no business matters, bad debts, etc., to bother your head about.

Mr. Fagg has built a house and gotten married to Miss Kate Johnson of Shasta after a three months courtship. She looked to me very much like an old maid previous to her marriage but she stuffed Fagg to believe her only twenty five. I believe it takes ladies who are not married some years to get over that age, doesn't it? Sarah has been to see her and likes her very well. Thinks she will make a good wife. So the bachelor life of our friend is ended. He has boarded with us for more than a year and was remarkably fond of euchre, mince pies and whisky.

York, the bookseller, here, has recently returned from the States and brought out all the new books you men-

tioned. Ida May I see is another abolition story. I have no sympathy with them. They advocate measures and believe in doctrines that I believe are opposed to the Constitution of the U.S. and that, if carried out, will create a civil war between the North and South. They seem to become fanatical on any subject they get started on in the North. There will be a reaction by and by. The Liquor Law, Slavery, Know-Nothingism, everything is carried to extremes. Women's Rights appears to be a hard ticket but I think they will vote in mass in a few years.

Miss Pellet is out here. As the women here are in the minority they have the right to do just as they please. So Miss Pellet has dropped that subject and lectures on temperance. She is so pleased with the perfect state of freedom in which women live here that she is getting up a scheme to liberate 5000 New England girls from the slavery in which they live and bring them out here. Glorious idea! I hope she will get some up here.

WEAVERVILLE, *May* 6, 1855

Summer is in full bloom with us and the old idea that gold exists only in barren countries is exploded, for every day we are sluicing off whole banks of flowers in our claim. I often wish when looking at them that the seeds I sent you had grown. Carter (my partner) even has a bottle with a boquet in it on our table, about the only purely ornamental article our cabin has.

I am working for passage money now, but I don't think I shall get it in time to go home this summer, although the past week we did very well. The four of us made $226.00. This is Congress wages and a little more. Certainly we ought to be satisfied, but when we wash out the little pile at night — forty, fifty or one day sixty two dollars — we exclaim why can't there be a thousand. I

have been here so long I ought to make a thousand a day for some time to get even. But don't dream any such dreams. Such cases are rare, I might say almost out of date now. I believe, however, that mining, with ordinary success, is the best business yet in the country. Not one farmer, merchant or banker makes money and *keeps it* out of fifty. Most of them are sold out by the Sheriff. It is some consolation to me when I meet my old friends of '49, who were once the Merchant Princes of San Francisco, Sacramento or Marysville, to find them (as most of them are) dead broke, communing in some mining town and trying to make the fortune they once had over again. Well, I never had any to lose.

There has been what the papers term a *crisis* in California, which means that those people who for the last few years have been doing an immense business on somebody else's money at five per cent per month, living at fashionable hotels, keeping fast horses and fast women, have failed — frizzlled out — bust up. People have come to the conclusion that the rate of interest and rents and lots in cities are too high. These things will all come down to their proper level by and by and then we shall have better times.

All this I look upon and read from the papers with the same interest as the man who looked at the bear and dog fight. Don't care a damn which is whipped as long as the claim pays. We get our pay every night in an article which the market doesn't affect.

We have plenty of reading matter: Harpers Magazine every month, the best in the world, I believe; and all the papers and around our table in the evenings we discuss the fate of nations, the siege of Sebastapole, the probabilities of a war with Spain, and how to fix our sluice boxes with false bottoms and ingenuous riffles so as to catch the most gold.

I am in excellent health and just now have a contented mind, which, you know, is a 'wall of brass,' but I am not in the mood for writing tonight, as you have probably found out before this. The first time I feel like it I will try again. I have written this just from a sense of duty so give me credit for it accordingly.

WEAVERVILLE, *September* 23, 1855

Tell Howard that Weaverville has held out better this summer than ever before. It has been full of people all the time. Eight new brick stores have been put up. Two of them are fine two stories that would be a credit to any town. It looks quite like a city. He knows the place where we are building a saw mill very well, about half way from the mouth of the North Fork to the East Fork. We have our mill up and the dam and expect to be sawing in about a month. We have five men and I am building the dam after my own model. This is the most important part: to build a dam to stand the tremendous freshets of winter. These mountain streams are little brooks in summer, but in the rainy season — Oh my — you wouldn't believe me if I should tell you that I have seen the Yuba River rise thirty feet in one night. The little brook becomes an immense river but runs down in a few days. I think we can build a dam that will stand, but quien sabe? I can tell you better next winter.

We have a good location and can build a mill for less than two thousand dollars, that will be worth four. Carter and I work ourselves and do everything in the most economical manner. 'Industry must thrive,' you know, and I think we have gotten a good thing. I wanted to come home very much this summer, but as I was going into this operation I could not leave without great loss.

I have staid here longer than I ever did in one place before, since I left home. I know the whole country from

Sacramento up and everybody in it who is settled permanently and I can probably do better here than anywhere else. Besides, it really seems like home now. There are some really fine people whom I think a great deal of here, although I should much prefer living in a city on the sea coast. The romance of the mountains is all gone and people here are getting to be like other folks fast. Would you believe that a majority voted for the Maine liquor law in this county? In a place where every store, hotel and saloon keeps liquor and everybody, nearly, drinks! Yet such is the fact. You have probably heard that the State has given 5,000 majority for the R.N. or American ticket, a party to which I am proud to say I belong. The Governor-elect, J. N. Johnson, is one of my old Sacramento friends. He was out in Carson Valley in '50 at the time I was there. MacKenzie, one of the State Prison Directors, is one of our citizens and Doctor Bates of Shasta is Treasurer. So I ought to stand a good chance of getting an office if I apply. I don't think of it at present.

Feast says: 'Don't write all night as I have two letters to write.' I am using his desk so I must close.

SUNNY HOLLOW
NORTH FORK OF TRINITY
November 4, 1855

The saw mill is almost finished. We shall commence sawing this week. It is not three months since we cut down the first tree and the wilderness already blooms with a saw mill, another monument to the indomitable energy and perseverance of the Yankee race. Long may it saw! and we be able to sell all the lumber at $75 per m. but for cash.

I rambled about three miles up the East Fork this morning. Didn't shoot a thing because it was Sunday, I

suppose. Don't think I went out gunning. I only took a walk and took my gun along for protection. By the way, that gun (a splendid double barrel one) is the only article I have left out of my outfit which I took from New York. It was a present from Arthur and has been the companion of all my rambles. It has brought down albatross off Cape Horn and countless ducks and geese in the Sacramento Valley. I prize that gun and if ever I live to get home you shall see it for it will come too.

SNOWY HOLLOW, *December* 15, 1855

'Oft in the stilly night...' you know the rest, came to my mind just now, for you must know that during the day I am employed in cutting saw logs and in the evening I sit by a glorious fire and meditate and smoke and read. James says that when a man meditates deeply he is in love. It can't be so in my case for there is no one here to love. To be sure Mrs. Cory lives close by but she told me once of a certain Mr. Parker at the Mountain House making improper advances to her one day. 'Right in broad daylight,' says she, and she told him that she would scald him if he touched her. So it won't do to make love in that quarter, but I have been meditating deeply tonight.

Without, it is snowing fiercely and within it is rather dull and I have been looking into the fire and thinking over my California life and my expedition to Carson Valley. I wondered what has become of Milly, a girl I met there, a blooming Illinois girl with moccasins on, poor thing. She told me she had worn out all her shoes, but to my eye they looked more in keeping with the scene than satin slippers would. I never shall forget how thankful her mother was when I gave them some flour and tea for they were, as she expressed it, 'plumb out of everything.' Milly wanted to give me a note but I told her her

word was sufficient. She was certain to meet me in California and pay for them some time, but I have never seen her since.

From this beautiful valley my thoughts took a leap to Tahiti and I compared the two places. I must say that I like the tropics best. I thought when I was in the former place that it would be a fine place to settle down, raise stock and hunt. Why shouldn't a man enjoy life there, with no neighbors to bother him, no rules of society to conform to, as independent as the savages? And then, what health he would enjoy: no late hours and dissipation to ruin his constitution and then, when I was at Tahiti I thought how comfortably I could settle down in one of these cottages among the orange groves. These simple minded Kanakas must be happier than our wealthy Upper Ten in New York. They don't want any money. This gold that we are all striving after and denying ourselves pleasure for now, that we may accumulate a little of it, doesn't trouble them at all. Why didn't I stay in one of those places? I asked myself the question but when I come to examine my own character I believe I should not have been contented in either place. I must have an object in view; something to live for except bare board and clothes, or I am uneasy. I wish it were otherwise but a man cannot change his character in a short time, some points never. 'The ruling passion is strong in death,' you know. Perhaps you might say it is my fate, but I don't believe much in fate or luck.

I read some tonight and I have been meditating on that and like the student who read about Rome I exclaim: 'Shall I ever see these things?' It was in Harpers: A Day in Pompeii. Wouldn't it be interesting to shake that water that has been preserved two thousand years and to spend a day looking into the habits of that ancient people, as he did. They must have lived high, those old

Romans. I have been reading Plutarch's Lives. Some time ago I cut my foot and was confined to the cabin for some ten days. I read the lives with great interest, of Alexander, Antony, Demosthenes and Cicero and a host of others. Old Plutarch was a man something like Franklin, I think. He had a heap of that article called common sense. His style is very interesting and, like Shakespeare, it is a book that you can always take up and find something new.

Well, as the old woman said, I have gotten plumb out of anything to read and so I had to meditate and then the thought struck me 'You might as well be writing to Mary. She thinks so much of getting a letter from you, at least she says so,' and I believe it for I judge you by myself and I do think a great deal of your letters.

I have been hunting all day. I only have to go three or four miles to find plenty of deer, but it is a hard road to travel, over these mountains with the snow knee deep. I saw four deer today. The first time I fired and missed. In a short time I saw a buck and two does just ahead. He stopped and turned partially around to have a look at me and I took him right in the neck. He came rolling down the mountain, leaving a long streak of blood in the snow. He was a noble fellow with three pronged antlers. After I got him I was like the man that drew an elephant in a raffle. I did not know what in the world to do with him. I could just lift him and it was three miles from home. I finally cut off his hind quarters and trudged for home and got here just before night, completely tuckered out. But we had venison steaks for supper and I ate some. I wonder if you know what it is to have a good appetite? Now I have no doubt but that I could eat all you would put on your table for your family tonight, with perfect ease. Tomorrow we will go out and get the balance of the deer and have meat enough to last us for a week.

Venison is good here. We don't have to run them on snow shoes with dogs all day, as they used to at home.

I heard tonight that the lower part of the town of Weaverville burnt up last night. You recollect that the upper part has been burnt twice. I don't think our store is burnt as there are several brick stores below it. Rather a bad time to be burnt out as the ground is covered with snow and it rains or snows all the time.

RAINY HOLLOW, *January* 27, 1856

Here beginneth the correspondence for /56. For seven years we have kept it up. 'How long, oh Lord, how long,' before we shall see each other face to face? In the meantime I will wish you another Happy New Year on paper.

You will perceive I alter the name of this location according to the weather. Last summer the sun shone for months without a cloud. In December it snowed all the time and this month it has rained nearly all the time, although I must confess I borrowed the idea from Butterfield. One of his letters I enclose. Butterfield alias Phenix, alias Squibob, alias Lieut. Derby of the Top G Engines is decidedly a wit. Beats Doesticks all hollow. He recently made a trip to Oregon and accounts for the names of places up there very ingeniously. Trinidad is so called, he says, from being settled by three families, the name being derived from two Greek words: trini, three, and dad, fathers. Coming to a place called Rainier, he says it was so called from the following circumstance: Two men ascending the Columbia stopped here on account of a shower and turned into a deserted cabin. After it had rained three months it set in for a long storm. They had lain four months without speaking to each other, when one day one turns over and says to the other: 'It rains here.' 'Yes,' says the other. 'It does rain

here.' So they called that place Rainhere which has been corrupted into *Rainier*.

Well, it rains here some and has been snowing as far down as Sacramento, a thing unheard of before. We had fine sleighing here for a fortnight and the coldest weather I ever felt in California. The ice froze in our pond eight inches thick, but we have neither sleighs or skates to enjoy it. We haven't got any roads if we had sleighs.

We are having a fair spell just now. The saw mill runs first-rate but we don't sell much lumber, not half as much as could make. But we hope to clear the mill by next summer. It has cost over three thousand dollars and we have sold about five hundred dollars' worth of lumber so far.

It will be seven years next August since I arrived in the State and I shall be thirty years old. I shall endeavor to graduate from this school if possible, this year. I consider my education finished and that I am tolerably well qualified for any kind of a profession, whether hard labor or head work, from cook to the practice of law.

I started out when I was twenty, you know, and for the past nine years I have fought my way. Now, if I can quit even I intend to take another start. I have never regretted the time I have spent here. A new country is the place for a young man and I still think California the best country on the face of the globe, but right about here or anywhere in the mines I can't content myself to settle down for life. I like to live in a large town and especially on or near the ocean. I have a great fancy for commercial pursuits and how in the world I ever came to fix myself and stay so long up here, I don't see. I'm getting more and more uneasy, however, every year, although the business I am in now suits me very well. These are some of my plans for the future... I am always building castles in the air. I probably always shall. 'No matter about the moss as long as we can roll.'

I don't think Sewall is dead. Probably he is cruising about the Pacific or East Indies somewhere, enjoying himself, I dare say. I wish I were with him but he ought to write home every opportunity. He will turn up at home some of these days, when he gets tired or *flat broke*.

NORTH FORK, *April* 6, 1856

I had a notion of writing to the American Consul at Melbourne to inquire after Sewall but as he is at home it is all right.

Our dam, about which you express so much anxiety, still lives, although I must say we have had no great freshet yet and it has gotten so late that I do not expect one this year. But business is awfully dull with us. We don't sell enough lumber to pay expenses. The little place is perfectly dead. No one has money enough to build a Public House although one is sadly wanted.

I have just gotten the March number of Harpers. I like all of it. Every piece is interesting, but the Easy Chair is good. His ideas on the fashions and follies of society are true to the letter. The foreign gossip always amuses me. I like Little Dorritt so far very well. I have only seen one extract from Hiawatha. I don't think much of it. Some of the parodies on it are good. 'The song of Pinky Winky' is the best I have seen.

SAW MILL, *June 1st*, 1856

I believe it is some time since I wrote to you but I have been occupied on Sundays which is my day for literary labor, about something else or else did not feel in the vein. I date this from our new house built close by the mill, the most comfortable room I have lived in so far, size 17 × 12, good fireplace, clothed overhead and papered with the London Illustrated News, which gives it the appearance of an artist's studio, furnished with French bedsteads,

table, two arm chairs, cupboard, etc., all home made; also a dog, cat and five kittens — a free and easy bachelors' hall.

As for the mill, I am afraid it won't win. The river is going to keep high and very little fluming will be done. We have done our part; have made a first-rate mill; got all the facilities for making lumber ready. If we can't sell it it is not our fault. The North Fork does not grow. In fact it is decaying and if something does not turn up this summer I shall be satisfied to get out, even this fall.

The next four months are the busy season on the river and we may do something yet. So much for business. We do so little that I have very little to say about it.

I was at Weaverville last Sunday. Weaverville is advancing in civilization and the fine arts very fast. They have built a good school house. Gambling has been entirely stopped. The theatre has been enlarged and beautified. At last we have a performance worth looking at. Instead of Miss Mowbray and Pebby we have a star actress: Estelle Potter and 'Box and Cox,' etc. have been succeeded by the 'Hunchback,' 'The Lady of Lyons,' etc. The house is crowded and the audience *cry* for they have fine feelings, these rough miners, and it only requires talent to have them appreciate it. I saw her play 'Lucretia Borgia' and it was as good acting as I ever saw.

They have a dancing school also in full feather, only think of that for the mines. Mr. Wilson and Miss Burbank (the 'Divine Lizzie') guide them through the mazes of the waltze and schottiche. After ten o'clock the school closes and anyone paying one dollar for the music has the right to pitch in. The night I attended there were about forty gents and twenty ladies, quite a ball. Don't you think Weaverville has changed since I wrote to you in the year '52?

NORTH FORK, *July 12th*, 1856

I went to Weaverville to spend the Glorious Fourth. Quite a large crowd came in to this place. There was an oration, etc., at the theatre and there was ice cream brandy smashes and all sorts of fancy drinks at the saloons. Ice is plentiful at only five cts per lb this year and these summer drinks are a luxury. The Sons of Temperance languish about this time of year. There was also a picnic for the Sabbath School children. There are thirty children here and on the increase. This is exclusive of babies in arms.

Following the current of events and determined to have all the fun, I dressed myself with an entire new rig and attended to all these things. Was fortunate enough to get into a private box at the theatre with two married women and fanned the baby with my hat. I went to the picnic, ate some of the fixins, didn't address the children; took dinner at the French Restaurant at four o'clock with Feast and others. But *the* event of the day was the ball at night. As we didn't go to bed until the next day at noon we'll call it all day. The ball was given at Chauncey's Hotel, about two miles below town. Just before dark all the buggies (three), wagons, horses and mules were put in requisition and away we went at a race for the house. The ball room was a fine one and there was a good band of music. There were about 250 persons present, 50 ladies. We had ten sets of cotillions at once.

The Dancing School has improved the men and they could all go through a cotillion without making a botch of it. I found myself behind the times when they called a schottische a waltz, not having paid as much attention to this as to the saw mill lately.

Well, the supper was spread in an arbor. Plenty to eat and drink and they took in a thousand dollars at the bar and still there was no one drunk in the ball room and everything went off smoothly.

We quit at sunrise and scrub raced it back to town. Miss Burbank's horse fell going about 2.40, through an old bed of a stream. She went about fifteen feet over his head and landed in a soft muddy place, with all her ball fixins on. Some gents along with her washed off the thickest of the mud and got her home in a buggy.

Mrs. Todd broke down the seat in a wagon and created considerable confusion as she weighs about 200. She lost $75 worth of jewelry.

Taking it all together it was the greatest affair of the kind that has ever come off here and we had lots of fun.

I see by the papers from the States that the American people are 'spiling for a fight.' What a pity that England will not pitch into us about this time. It would heal up all the difficulties in Kansas, stop the fighting in the Senate and put an end to the Vigilance Committee. Give us war, by all means, or we shall have two or three civil wars in a few years.

Fortunately for me, we are busy making lumber. We sold 25,000 feet the last fortnight and have orders for 25,000 more. We keep the saw running day and night. If it would only last this way all the year round we could make something.

NORTH FORK, *September* 21, 1856

I have advertised my half of the mill for sale but I am afraid I shall not find a purchaser for cash, although the property is known to be the best in the County. I really think I am in luck just at present. The mill has come out beyond my most sanguine expectations. I am getting a foot hold again. We are still making and selling considerable lumber. If Howard Buck wonders where we find a market for it tell him we found a market for 100,000 feet right at the mill this past summer. It was floated from there down the North Fork into the Trinity

and used, most of it, for building flumes in the canon. One of the flumes built by a China Company is 440 yds long. The Chinese are doing well. In fact all the river claims are paying and I think if it does not rain in the course of the next fortnight we shall collect all that is due us. I got $400 today. If we do this, the mill will have paid $5,000. This will pay for it and all our expenses. Do you think we could do this in Maine?

We have made our County and State nominations. There are but two political parties in this County: American and Democratic. You know where to find me. Fremont stands a poor show in this state. The fact is he is known too well. I am disgusted when I read from the Northern papers the account of the doings of this man and no doubt the people there all swallow it down. The New York Tribune makes him out the Conqueror of California, when it is well known here that he never was in a single fight. Kearny and Stockton conquered the country before he got here. I have seen him and know men who were with him on the plains. He is a Gigantic Humbug. I am also taken all aback to hear that a great many old Whigs will support him in preference to Fillmore. I do hope that Father is not one of these, although I do not suppose Fillmore has much show. Yet, he is my man and beyond all doubt the best man for the office. We are all going up to Weaverville to hear Governor Foote on the 30th. I have not heard a political speech yet.

Kiss little Alice for me and tell her that her weather-beaten old Uncle hopes to do it for himself one of these days. If coming events cast their shadow before, then Sarah is likely to have an accession to her family shortly. Verbum sap.

NORTH FORK, *November* 16, 1856

I am reading Homer's Iliad. I have never gotten hold

of it before and I like it very much. There is no such poetry written now. Feast has sent to San Francisco for several new works I have seen highly spoken of in Harpers, which I shall have to read this winter and as soon as the snow falls the deer will come down and I intend to do some hunting.

Speaking of Harpers reminds me of *hoops*. I wonder if you wear such dresses? They have not gotten out here yet. Tell little Alice these kisses on paper don't amount to much and to keep hers for me till I see her. She will be chary of her kisses, I expect, in a year or two more.

NORTH FORK, *December* 14, 1856

The snow has been coming down for a week past and now lays three feet deep on a level and on the mountains, say from fifteen to twenty. The pond is frozen over and winter 'reigns supreme.'

Cap Trufant from Bath, formerly, but an acquaintance of mine since '49, came down from Weaverville with me and has been spending a week with me. On these splendid moonlight evenings we have often wished ourselves in Maine, to have a sleigh ride, with a pretty girl by your side of course. But here we have no sleighs and no girls so the thing is out of the question. We think that a kind Providence has compensated us for these things in some measure by giving us plenty of game. Our lot is cast in a mountain land and we 'chase the bounding doe.' This is the hunting season and we have been slaying the deer, ducks and quail awfully. Twenty one quail are hanging on the roof of the house destined for our female friends in Weaverville. That is, if Trufant can ever get there. He is snowed in for the present. We have a good comfortable house, plenty to eat and we sit by our roaring fire these long evenings and broil quail on the coals and then such vension steaks! Today we are to have a pot

pie and one of our men has gone out to kill eight quails for it. He is banging away on the side of the mountain now. How would you like such a life? I think you would have a good appetite and get fleshy on our fare.

From this state of things you can't expect me to write you much of a letter but you are interested in my reading and just now I have Macaulay's History, Pope's works and a novel called the Necromancer but Homer's Iliad is the favorite. As I read this I was astonished that I had lived so long and never read it. I read for hours perfectly absorbed and insensible to all about me. I can repeat whole pages from it now. When you read this you will think that Shakespeare and Byron are mere imitators of Homer. They do not equal him. I don't know whether you will take such a fancy to it as I have but if you have never read it you must be interested.

We have received the news from the States that Buchanan is elected and although Fillmore was my first choice I am glad to hear that Fremont and suffering Kansas has gone in. Depend upon it, it was all got up for effect and the Abolitionist in Kansas has done more to kick up a fuss than the Southern men. I think it will quiet down now. You had better move in your sewing circle to devote the money to buying flannel jackets for the little negroes in Africa. It would be better applied.

SAW MILL, *March 7th*, 1857

I see the Boston Weekly Journal and generally read it but I don't go a cent on Boston or Boston people. I dislike the whole institution. New York is the place and New York papers the ones I read to get the news. Where one Boston paper is read here, there are ten from New York. If I were rich or flat broke I should prefer New York to any place in the Atlantic States and you would, too, if you knew the place.

As I received your letter I had just finished the February Harpers. I have also read Bayard Taylor's letters in the New York Tribune. We take the Alta, Golden Era, and Trinity Journal by the year. The 'Alta Cal' is the leading paper on the Pacific Coast and always contains all the news from South America, the Islands, China, Australia and the East Indies. I have no new books and have read over and over again Plutarch, Pope and the Iliad. I am glad you are going to read it. The first may be dry but it will increase in interest. The description of Juno's deceiving Jove by the Girdle of Venus while Neptune assists the Greeks is clothed in the most beautiful language and the answer of Achilles to the Ambassadors is sublime. You must tell me the passages that arrest your attention for you must be insensible to the charms of eloquence if they do not. There are lots of books of travels, I see advertised that I should like to read but at some future day I hope to get at them.

You will probably hear of the death of John Pierce before this reaches you. I was reading the Alta the other evening and saw it. I laid down the paper and felt sad for the loss of one of my friends and companions of my youth. A flood of recollections passed through my mind: of the old High School House; of our sliding down the hills of Bucksport when we were boys. We ran together in New York and Boston. What glorious times we had together in 1850, coursing over the prairies of Sacramento on our California horses. The last time I was at San Francisco in '53, John was master of the schooner 'Amo' and we were together a great deal. I liked John and looked forward with pleasure to meeting him again. In spite of his faults he was a whole-souled generous fellow. All I knew about his death was the notice in the papers: that he died at Mendocino a place about 100 miles north of San Francisco on the Coast.

NORTH FORK, *June* 28, 1857

I have just read 'Little Dorrit' for June. It is growing more interesting and I think that the next number will develope something. Mrs. Sparkler is not mentioned. She is decidedly an interesting young woman. I think it would do her good to have to dance again. Perhaps you do not witness such sudden rises at home as we read about, but I have seen them here. Not often now, but in years past men who never had more than five dollars at a time at home came here and made in a few weeks five hundred or a thousand. In nine cases out of ten it was the old adage 'put a beggar on horseback...' They went to the devil in just about a week. Verily, it is harder to stand prosperity than adversity. We all honour full confidence in ourselves. I think that I could stand about a hundred thousand. It always seems to me that if I were possessed of that sum that I should be only filling the station in society that I was born to occupy, but the plain fact is I have seen a great many such instances and I have never yet found the man who made any considerable sum of money by accident or by some streak of luck, but what invariably it ruined them and they soon lost it all. But of course, we should be exceptions. Oh, yes.

So Sewall is pleased with Calcutta. Doctor Barry and I started to go there from Weaverville one morning, but our mules got tired at Tower's Hotel, just this side of Shasta and we stopped. It seemed to be very easy for me to roam around once but lately I have gotten fast, partly because I want to try staying in one place and make something, and secondly because I have not had any money. I don't seem to be any better off and don't enjoy life half as well. My letters to you, I suppose, you must have noticed, are not as interesting as when I was going from place to place. There is nothing interesting to note down here.

NORTH FORK, *July* 12, 1857

'Independence Day has come. Lu val, lu val, etc.' and gone. This day has generally been distinguished in my life by some remarkable event. I can remember all the Fourth of Julys for years back. There were the Sunday School picnics and Father's dinner, the steamboat excursion with Mrs. Little's scholars, the trip to the sea shore on Long Island, the excursion to West Point — a day ever to be remembered. We had a happy day at West Point and coming home there was a dance in the saloon. I did not know a girl on board but there were crowds of them, and hearing them call out 'A side wanted here,' I went up to a group of young ladies who seemed to be itching to dance and offered my services (you know I was always bashful). I was taken up by one and we danced until she tired me down. Went on deck and sat in the moonlight. Got quite intimate but forgot to ask her where she lived and we parted — never saw her afterward. Then came the Fourth at sea. I have a distinct recollection of a good dinner, with lots of claret, Madeira, Italia and other drinks. After dinner all becomes dim. The evening I have no recollection of at all. Presume I must have gone to sleep. The next Fourth, dined at Brighton — a five dollar dinner, wines not included. John A. Sutter, B. T. Washington, Doctor Wake Brierly and other great men were present. The company got gloriously drunk and there was a bit of a fight but nobody hurt.

Then, at Downieville. I always think of the Spanish girl standing on the plank of the bridge, tossing her hat to a friend and putting the rope around her neck, folding her hands and facing death with a bravery that made us men ashamed — pauvre Josepha. And girls were so scarce in those days, too.

Then, at Weaverville. A bloodier day still. I never shall forget that scene: The Sheriff and his posse entering

the saloon, some loud talk, a single shot, then a volley and the ominous stillness that succeeded. Then the rush of the crowd into the room and the bodies of Horton and his mistress weltering in their blood.

The next Fourth at Weaverville was a little more civilized. I was on the road to Marysville. The stage was crowded with people. In the evening we all got sleepy and cross; almost had a fight with a Spanish woman who insisted on taking up the whole of the back seat. You see while we stopped she jumped my claim and I found her with her head out one window and her feet out the other. I compromised by letting her lay her head in my lap.

The next Fourth we got up a celebration at Weaverville. Tevis gave us a beautiful oration. One year from that day he delivered an oration in Downieville and gave offence by some remark to a Mr. Lippincott, who challenged him and *murdered* him. Tevis, who was the soul of honor, knew nothing about fighting and to the false friends of Tevis is the blame to be laid. It could easily have been explained and settled without having recourse to shot guns. He was a young lawyer, full of promise, an eloquent speaker and a man of fine taste. Lippincott goes about in this State with the brand of Cain upon him: a bar room politician, shunned by every true gentleman.

The next Fourth, at Red Bluffs, has nothing of interest ... a ball at the Lunar House and intense heat everywhere.

A year ago at Weaverville there was an old fashioned celebration and an overflowing ball at Chauncey's new hotel, an unprecedented sale of whisky and a flirtation with an actress.

Well, here we are down to '57 and nothing going on at Weaverville. I was determined to find some fun so I started down river to hunt the Fourth of July. Six miles below I found the Stars and Stripes waving at Big Flat

and Mrs. McQuillan in gorgeous array at the Union Hotel, getting dinner. I stopped and took in a large quantity of salmon and green peas. I went down two miles further and found Bradly. Spent the afternoon with him. In the evening went down a mile further to Chilton's. Found a magnificent layout of pies, cake, new cheese, new butter and a tall, genteel-looking young lady asking you whether you would have buttermilk or sweet milk to drink. I just concluded to camp right there. Found a jolly company and had a good time.

NORTH FORK, *October* 10, 1857

After ninety days of cloudless sky we had a smart rain one night, but it is all fair again. The fluming companies are all doing well and we have but $500 standing out on flumes. This I think we shall get in another week. You will understand that the weather is very important about this time, for one night more rain would have sunk that $500 as easily as the turn of a card, but if it holds fair another week I think we shall be safe. There is a claim now being worked at Oroville, on Feather River, where the river is flumed thirty eight hundred feet in length. Last week they took out $1100 in seven hours but we have no such rich claims on Trinity.

I am glad to hear of Sewall's safe return. If he gets a ship next year he is getting along fast. I blame myself sometimes for not thinking more of him, for not having a greater affection for him, but one cannot control this and somehow all my affection centers on you. If I think of home, your image rises up first. I think of you constantly, but he hardly ever enters my mind. I suppose this is on the principle that one cannot serve two masters and it goes hard against the Mormon doctrine, doesn't it? I feel sorry to think that you are growing old, losing your taste for singing, etc., but I will make you young again

while I am with you. That is if I can make the riffle and get home again and I think I can see my way through.

NORTH FORK, *November* 15, 1857

Yours of Sept. 30th came yesterday. I expect a letter for you and one I wrote to Mother, on or about August 3d, were lost. The mails have been very irregular lately, all owing to that *abomination* the P. M. S. Co. They have the line across Nicaragua in dispute. They have the company at Tehuantepec and the Mexican government in a perfect snarl and in the meantime they have the whole thing in their own hands and are making millions out of it. Now one would suppose that a company composed of human men would after making such immense sums as they have, let up a little on the passage, put on first class steamers, treat the public liberally, etc.

Now, I don't know who these men are that control this thing but I will tell how they do act. They are running now the old Panama that came round in '49 and laying up their best boats. They charge more for passage than they did in '49. They abuse and starve the steerage passengers worse than ever. They have literally *murdered* hundreds of persons on the passage. You don't hear much of this perhaps, but I see men every day who came that route, and nothing but youth and a strong constitution saved them. Just let them lose a boat on this side carelessly and a million or so of money and four hundred lives and I wouldn't like to have my neck in the place of the Agent or engineer if he ever came to San Francisco.

I know several of the passengers on the Central A. but only one intimately, J. L. Weeks of Lowell, Mass. He had three thousand dollars belted around him when he left Cole's store and if I know the character of the man, he sank with it.

The summer is ended. After one hundred and twenty days of dry season — I can almost say of cloudless skies — the rains descended and after three days rain the floods came and away went the flumes. First one started and went down against the next and started that and so on, until 60,000 feet of lumber, wheels, pumps, buckets, etc., went careening down to the Pacific. I stood on the bank and saw them go with a smile of complacency for the miners have all done well and the lumber was all *paid for*.

After considerable study I have made up my mind to take a vacation for one year and of course visit home. I shall rent my half of the mill to Carter from the 1st of January next for one year. So you may look for me some time early in the spring but I will keep you informed of my movements. I had much rather sell entirely but cannot possibly, but I think by hard rustling I can get enough money to go home and come back, in case you will board me free or on a long credit. We have done very well this summer and if we could collect all before I want to leave I should be pretty flush, but I can't expect it. Tell Sewall to make his arrangements so as to be at home too, by all means and we will have a family festival. I am uneasy and can't read or sleep nights now, thinking about this trip. I have hardly been out of the mountains since '52 and I expect to see great changes and you will see a pretty good specimen of California society; half-civilized, Father will think it, I guess. 'Fly swifter round, ye wheels of time and bring the promised hour.' Of course there is no use in writing such long letters to you now as we shall soon see each other but you can keep on until I tell you to stop as we don't know what might happen.

NEW YORK, *November* 2, 1858

Here I am in old 29 South Street again, on my second trip to California. We have secured passages on the 'Empire City' via Havana and sail tomorrow at 2 o'clock. I had to put Jennie in the first cabin in a state room with two ladies, a friend of mine knows them, as we could not secure a room to ourselves between here and Havana. After that we change to the 'Granada' and make a new arrangement and if I don't get in to the first cabin then don't call me a 'bummer.'

We had a fine day to Boston and put up at the Quincy House. Hattie Somerby called on us and spent the evening as we did not go to N.Y. until the next day. We were fortunate to go on the splendid Steamer Metropolis from Fall River and sat down to a magnificent supper and had a splendid state room all for $8.00. We stopped here at the Howard Hotel, corner Broadway and Maiden Lane.

Sunday, we went to Trinity Church in the morning and in the afternoon Pond called and we walked up to Union Park over into the 2nd Avenues and rode down in the cars. Saturday evening, by the way, we went to Laura Keane's theatre and saw a good play. Sunday evening we went over and heard Beecher. He was first-rate as he always is.

We are having a fine time and Jennie suits me exactly to run round with, as you know she likes to race round the streets and everything is new to her and it is fun enough for me to hear her criticise the ladies' dresses and her exclamations of delight at the pretty things she sees in the windows on Broadway.

We went to Murray's in Maiden Lane where Joe bought the opera glass and she bought half a dozen silver forks with the money Father and Mother gave her, and a splendid cake basket with what Sewall Swazy gave her.

I hope we shall have a day in Havana but don't expect

to land. And now how are you all? I shall be posted up on Bucksport people now when we correspond again. You know you wrote about people I hardly knew before. Write me all the gossip and particularly the new engagement. You see by this letter that I have not forgotten you although I am more than ever satisfied that I am married and that I have got such a good companion 'for she pleaseth me well' and as far as I can see, Jennie is perfectly satisfied with me.

WEAVERVILLE, *January* 30, 1859

I really haven't anything of interest to tell you. I have gone into business with Cole as it was altogether the best chance that I saw. The trade of this place has increased largely and we sell lots of goods although times just now are dull as it is always at this season. We expect to sell $100,000 this year, as the sales last year were over $50,000 and the Frazer river fever took off lots of trade.

Turner, Trufant's old partner, is going to build us a house in the spring and we have the rent for his board, which is better than paying him the money. He is a fine man and wants a home very badly. So we are all settled in life you see and shall get along fine, if nothing happens and, by the way, there are no *babies* going to happen for some time. We are both of a mind on that subject. Every married woman here nearby has a baby or is just going to have one and there are over 100 children now in this district and two schools.

We go to our new church Sundays and listen to the poorest apology for a backwood's Methodist preacher that ever you saw. I wish you would tell Mr. Craig that there is a splendid opening for a good Congregational preacher here.

Not to change the subject but we attended one dancing party got up on a new plan for this country. Every gen-

tleman brought a lady. We had fifteen couples — fine young ladies and a very pleasant party. Jennie danced a hole through her slipper and was complimented highly for her dancing. Several young men expressed a determination to go home and get married immediately after making her acquaintance and they all think I am a fortunate fellow. I think so, too. She is everything I could wish for for a wife.

Now, write me all about Bucksport. I have told the loafers in Fagg's back room all about our fishing at Mt. Desert and our chowder party, camp meeting and muster and it makes them feel homesick to hear it. I often think that was the happiest year of my life. Probably I never shall enjoy such another. Truly, my remembrances of Bucksport are beautiful, especially of you and your house.

WEAVERVILLE, *April* 7, 1859

I have been reading the papers. Everything appears to be lively: business, amusements, etc., everywhere but here. We are literally dying out here. Business does not improve as usual at this season. Last year we sold goods faster than we could get them here. Now we don't keep a mule going.

Our spring is now in full bloom. On the 1st of April I gathered quite a bouquet of flowers. The grain is up several inches and people are planting gardens. Cole and Fagg are making a garden and we are doing a good business in the chicken line. From five hens we bought last winter we have already thirty-five chickens, one brood a month old. All these things are growing plenty. Eggs are now worth but $2 per dozen; potatoes 5 cts. per lb. California, the past year, raised more potatoes than were needed and this year will raise nearly all the wheat we shall want. Hogs, chickens, vegetables and women are getting plentiful, thank God.

There is also a change taking place in the religion of Weaverville. Heretofore it has been the ancient heathen mythology. Bacchus and Venus have been the most worshipped, but temples are also dedicated to Diana and Terpsichore. Last Sabbath a man in black rode in, and it was soon noised abroad that he was a preacher of strange doctrines. We soon ascertained from his singing and various other signs that he belonged to a sect called Methodist. If he comes often he may succeed in establishing his sect and finally overthrowing the false doctrines that are more preached and practised on Sunday here; such as: trading, drinking, gambling, etc. May God prosper him in his good work so that people may save their money and pay for their groceries.

You speak of a ball in Bucksport being attended by the aristocracy. I thought you ran with them. Certainly times must have changed then, to allow balls and to call any other party than the Darlings, Folsoms, Swazeys, Bucks, etc., aristocracy. Have you gotten up another circle higher than these?

Your refusing to allow the Magnetic Telegraph to run through the village is perfectly right. Don't allow any of these new-fangled, young-American notions to intercept the peace and quiet of the village. The next thing they will want to run a *rail road* through. No. No. Tell them that your fathers got along well enough without these things. Bucksport is the capital of Old Fogydom and is doing well enough.

WEAVERVILLE, *April* 14, 1859

We have gotten settled down again since Cole's death. Sarah will administer the estate and we will keep on with the business till next fall, in order to collect the debts and pay the liabilities.

Fraser has the house about half done. It is one and

a half stories, containing parlor 12×16, hall, dining room, kitchen and bedroom on the lower floor and two chambers, closets, etc., upstairs. Don't have any cellars here. A very neat pretty house it is, with a piazza like Father's.

Weaverville is not any behind Washington or Philadelphia for scandal. We have a famous divorce case now going on trial and I am on the jury. We sat it out eight hours today, hearing the lawyers squabble and testimony and haven't got half through. We get three dollars in cash per day and as the testimony is very *piquant* we don't care. Besides, the Hon. W. P. Dangerfield, Judge, allows us to smoke and whittle. He charged us to say nothing about this case when he dismissed us this afternoon but I guess it won't do any harm to tell you about it.

Susan Teresa R. vs. Philip R., are from Tiffin, Ohio. Married two years ago and started for California. They commenced quarrelling on the steamer because she was too thick with a young fellow and had quarrelled ever since until last January when, as his partner testified, he came down to the claim one morning and said the d—d bitch has gone. She went to live with a single gent who has a ranch. One of her bosom friends, a Mrs. Broom, quite a pretty young woman, was so embarrassed that the court room had to be cleared of spectators before she could answer some of the questions and then she made a clean breast of it and told of some of the richest conversations she had had with Susan, touching the *qualifications* of her husband, the unfortunate Philip, who it seems couldn't satisfy her at all. Mrs. Broom also saw Susan once upon a time at her house lying on the bed with a young man hugging her, but she didn't think there was 'anything improper' going on or she should have stopped it at once, of course. Susan asks for a divorce, however,

and Philip doesn't want her to be allowed to marry again or give her any of the property. Well, we shall endeavor to give injured innocence Justice though the heavens fall.

WEAVERVILLE, *May* 15, 1859

The ball of the German May Festival came off Thursday and Friday nights, for at this Festival you pay twelve dollars for a ticket and badge and have the run of it for three days and all you can eat and drink, *no extras*. There are lots of Germans about here, whole families of them all the way from Hamburg but the most of them have resided in the Western States. They held their annual May Feast here this year. The dancing commenced at six and supper at ten.

There were 60 ten gallon kegs of lager beer consumed, for one item, but it isn't intoxicating, you know. It was 240 feet to waltz around the room and we calculated that some of the Dutch Gals waltzed five miles in the course of the night.

Sunday, 15*th*

We all went to Church this morning and heard Mr. Myers tell something about Babylon and Bell-Shazar which he probably saw in some book last week. Jennie has gone to Sunday School where she has a class.

WEAVERVILLE, *June* 15, 1859

I have left the store as I was making nothing and the business will soon be closed up, so I will take my money out and let Nettleton and Personette settle up.

I have various plans in view and in the meantime I am fixing up round the house. I have made a lounge as near like yours as I could and a patent clothes line, the first one in the place. We have a what-not but not as good as yours, and what Jennie thinks most of: a nice bureau. I bought

everything in San Francisco and furnished the parlor, dining room and two chambers for $250. Good enough, I wish you could come and see us.

We have plenty of strawberries, only 75 cts a quart. They buy all there is brought in at that, just as quickly as they did in Bucksport last summer at 10 cts. Eggs are a dollar a dozen and there they stick. They can't glut the market at those prices.

WEAVERVILLE, *July* 15, 1859

We have had a fire and I had intended to have written you all about it but I haven't time. We had the pleasure of moving out and moving back again. That's all.

It burnt about fifty buildings, just up to our house. We tore down the house next below ours and as the wind was against it we succeeded in stopping it. The brick houses all stood. The Chinese portion was teetotally cleaned out. The theatre also went under. A great many amusing incidents happened and a great many men got drunk afterwards.

Jennie sends her love always, whether I put it in or not but this time she is looking over my shoulder and says put it in.

WEAVERVILLE, *July* 30, 1859

Last night we went to the circus. I counted ten young ladies with their fellows. They are growing up here fast. They get their growth and long dresses and go into society at thirteen!

I am living the most independent life you can imagine just now. Trufant and I are putting up a building by contract and we can make six dollars per day at it. It costs us just about $10 per week to live. We board Turner for the rent you know. I have, in connection with Turner, two houses rented out that brings us in $40 per month and

$1400 of my old capital on hand, so I consider myself rich. We have just what we want to eat and lots of company. As our house is right in the center of town Jennie does not get lonesome and I only wish that you and some of our Bucksport friends lived nearby. Jennie wants the girls to see how neatly she keeps her house and what nice squash pies she makes and what a pretty dress she has. She has learned to cook first-rate and we enjoy the glorious privilege out here of doing just what we like and living just to suit ourselves and not our neighbors.

WEAVERVILLE, *October* 29, 1859

The 27th was the anniversary of our marriage and we duly remembered it. I presented Jennie with a gold thimble and she me with a splendid copy of Shakespeare. It has been a happy year for both and I am just as much in love with her as ever and she is the best of wives.

I have sent to San Francisco by Fagg for a servant girl and Turner has furnished a bed room below stairs and we are going to take about four boarders. Jennie thinks she will have an easier time if she gets a good girl. What do you think they get here? *Forty dollars* a month. There are six or seven families here that pay that but you can hire them in San Francisco for 25 or thirty. However, board is ten dollars per week and four boarders will pay the servant and all our food.

Everything in the line of eatables is fast coming down here. Beef, the best cuts, sells for 12½ cts; flour 7½ cts; potatoes 3 cts; crushed sugar 20 cts; etc. — 50% less than they were two years ago.

I am still in the hog business. Bought another drove here and I am supplying the Chinese butchers and making something.

I sent down by Fagg for Adam Bede and promised myself a feast when I get it. As soon as Dickens' new story

is finished. I wish you would send it through the mail. I received the music all right but there is only one piano in town and that is unfortunately in a house of ill-fame. We are not able to have them plentifully as yet (I mean the pianos) but doubtless they will be within the reach of people in moderate circumstances one of these days.

WEAVERVILLE, *November* 30, 1859

I sent for a servant girl by Fagg. He could not find one to suit and we have given up the idea of taking boarders — Trufant excepted. I also sent by him for Adam Bede. I have just finished it. I think it a very good story but I have read books that I like better. I don't like that language that the lower classes talk in England and his style is rather hard and stiff when writing plain English and besides I like Heroes and Heroines in satin and crinoline better than poor people. Dickens is the only writer who can make any romance out of the life of the poor classes. This book seems to be to your taste and I expect 'Mrs. Poyser' is the character you fancy.

WEAVERVILLE, *December* 30, 1859

The winter so far is very mild. We spaded up a piece of our garden to set out strawberries last week, and the afternoons are like April, warm and sunny. I expect we shall catch it next month.

I wrote Father by the Overland Mail last week all about our farm, like Miss Martineau's, of an acre. But we have two good houses and lots and the fruit will be valuable during the next five years. We can also raise lots of vegetables, strawberries and chickens, turkeys and ducks. We shall have quite a lot of apples this year and as they are worth 25 cts apiece they are worth raising. I see that in San Francisco they sent such quantities from Oregon this last fall that they came down to five and six dollars

per bbl but that doesn't do us any good as freight is five cts per lb to this place and they would half rot before they got there.

We are going to set out some currants, plums and pears and get them started. Such a thing as a currant or a plum never was seen here except that it had been brought from the States in tin cans and we can raise all such things to perfection.

I wish we had some of your dahlias but we shall have to get along with sun flowers for the present. In three or four years, by the time you get ready to come and visit us, we shall have a nice place.

Jennie is at work making the gayest red dress you ever saw. Sends her love to all.

WEAVERVILLE, *January 22*, 1860

We have had a fine winter so far, no snow at all and no cold weather. Capt Trufant and I intend to sell our riding mules in the spring and buy a span to team with and we are amusing ourselves at present cutting wood. It is getting quite scarce already near town. We have to go two miles to find it and it is getting to be quite an object. It brings eight dollars per cord and is growing scarcer and higher every year. Over seven hundred cords were used in town last year.

We bought recently a variety of fruit trees from Sacramento: green gages, egg plums, apricots, nectarines, ox heart cherries, and six varieties of pear. We have also engaged lots of currants and strawberries. We have sixty five trees three years old. On one lot, principally apples, that bore last year. This year, if the season is favorable, we expect quite a crop.

I shall try and build a house in the spring. We have already planned one. When it is done I will send you a sketch of it and our farm of an acre. I am going to try

a hive of bees, also. I believe there is none north of Shasta and I see they are getting quite cheap down below. They brought 100 dollars a swarm for a long time and it was a profitable business bringing them from the States, but they can be bought now for 25.

This place is getting so civilized that really I have nothing to write. We are getting settled down like a New England village. A fight is a rare occurrence; gambling does not attract any attention as people are not so flush with money as they used to be and stay at home evenings instead of spreeing around town. The women mind their own business. No scandal or elopements — the doctor says it is distressingly healthy, owing to people drinking less whisky and keeping better homes.

You have heard probably of the discoveries of silver mines in Washoe and other valleys on the eastern side of the mountains. These are likely to prove very rich. I see a large quantity of silver was received at the mint lately. This ore yields better than quartz. It runs from three to nine thousand dollars a ton, almost pure silver. Next year there will probably be a great rush there so there seems to be no end to our mineral wealth. I have given up all idea of mining. I never had any luck and at present I don't know where I could go to make two dollars per day. You must either buy into a claim, and they are worth from 500 to 5000 dollars, or spend a like amount opening a claim and then perhaps not find anything. I could always do better at some other kind of business and not work half so hard.

I believe from what I read in the papers that they will work this slavery excitement up to a civil war by and by. Whenever you get at it and divide North and South on your side of the mountains we shall secede, with the Rocky Mountains for a line and form an Empire on the Pacific, with Washington Territory, Oregon and Cali-

fornia and we shall annex all of this side of Mexico. We should have a fine country. We don't care a straw whether you dissolve the Union or not. We just wish that the Republicans and Democrats in the Capital would get into a fight and kill each other all off like the Kilkenny cats. Perhaps that would settle the hash.

Jennie is writing and will probably tell you more news than I can remember. I was just thinking about that *charlotte russe* we got in Baltimore and told Jennie to try and make some. I am as fond of good things as ever and Jennie is a first-rate cook — and such an appetite as I have! Fortunately, potatoes are good and cheap and beef, too.

WEAVERVILLE, *June* 3, 1860

I could fill this sheet about the weather. You recollect my writing you last winter of the warm, beautiful weather and of my telling you we should catch it. Well, we had hot weather all the latter part of April. Everything came out fine. The peaches and apples got as large as a thimble, and in May we did catch it. Winter came on. After two weeks of cold, rainy and snowy weather it cleared off cold and on the 12th day it froze hard. The apples froze solid on the trees and corn, potatoes, tomatoes and everything but peas, quinces and cabbages went down like the dew before the sun and we have planted all over again. But alas, the apples we can't revive this year. We should have raised 15 or 20 bushels and they are very valuable here. Such weather never was seen before. It has been cloudy and rainy ever since, with several thunder showers.

Thursday afternoon the Germans formally buried the Empty Keg. The last keg of lager was all drunk. The empty keg was placed on a bier covered with a black pall and borne on the shoulders of six men. The procession numbered 4 or 500 and marched through town, the band

playing a funeral dirge, out into the mines. Speeches were made in German, appropriate no doubt (I couldn't understand them) and the keg buried. The procession marched back and the May Feast for 1860 was over, very much to the joy of those who like to sleep nights. The Germans, you see, are an institution out here. They are good citizens and have settled here permanently with their wives and families. The German women are not, as a general thing, handsome.

What a mixed-up Society we shall be here one of these days — descendants from all nations go to school here. By the way, we have voted to raise 1100 dollars and grade the school this year.

Our house is all done but furnishings. The outside is done and painted. We shall get in this month and we have the prettiest place in the county, everybody says. There are so few lots improved that it does your eyes good here to see anything like an orchard. You know they use this country for mining, which is to take a stream of water and wash off all the soil leaving piles of rocks, washing down the hills and filling up the hollows.

WEAVERVILLE, *July* 29, 1860

On the 18th of July a party of 24 of us went up to the summit of the mountains north of town, generally called Old Baldy. We started the day before in order to have a good view of the eclipse. We camped at night in a little valley near the top where there is a little pond. A company of men put up ice here and pack it to town. It is a good place to keep it as there were large snow banks still lying around. We passed a very pleasant night around our camp fire, singing songs and telling yarns and at half past three started to ascend one of the highest peaks to see the sun rise. After an hour's hard climbing, during which two of our party gave out and concluded to sit down and

see it rise then and there, we stood on the topmost peak. To give you some idea of our altitude: we could see far down below us on the north side of the mountain a perfect glacier of snow and ice that never thaws. We counted five lakes. One of them still frozen over. We afterwards went down to it and found the ice three feet thick. The snow lay all around it and one of us would occasionally slump in up to the neck and find no bottom. This was decidedly cool for July, wasn't it? The altitude of this mountain must be over 8000 feet. Of course we saw a magnificent sunrise. The sun first shone on Mount Shasta. This is the highest point in the United States — I think about 15000 feet — and distant from us about seventy five miles. It is white with snow all the year round. It looked beautiful in the rays of the sun.

As to the eclipse that was a humbug. It was passing off when the sun rose. The surface of the sun was about two thirds covered and in thirty minutes it was hardly to be noticed.

Standing on an immense granite boulder on the summit, I christened the mountain in a nautical manner by breaking a bottle over it: 'Mount Eclipse,' and after nine cheers we broke down the side for camp and arrived at home before dinner. One of our party (the School Master) wrote an account of our ascent for the paper and merely alluded to me as 'the Orator of the Occasion,' without giving my name which is usually the fate of great explorers and pioneers.

WEAVERVILLE, *October* 21, 1860

Jennie is quite recovered and the boy is in good condition but he is a heap of trouble and at the rate he eats and grows we shall want a cow soon. The mouths I have to feed now are awful: two males, three hogs, chickens and ducks. Our garden has helped out very much. We have

lived off of it this season and have enough potatoes, beets, turnips, etc., for winter. I am fattening three hogs to kill and salt. Have made a bbl. of pickles. We have put up tomatoes in all sorts of ways. I put up two dozen bottles fresh, sealed air-tight. Made ketchup and preserved in sugar over 100 lbs. This is our apple sauce and I like it better.

I hope next year we can afford to have an apple pie. Our trees are large enough to bear fifty bushels. They have been worth from 25 to 37½ cts per lb. here all summer, but this all owing to the freight. Down below they are cheap. Flour is only worth 11 dollars per bbl.; potatoes 2 cts a lb.; and in a few years fruit will only be worth the cost of bringing it to market. There are two farms within six miles from here that have over three thousand trees on them. Over 1,000,000 bushels of wheat have been shipped from San Francisco this fall to foreign countries. It is cheaper there than in Chicago — so, if the gold ever gives out, we can do very well here.

WEAVERVILLE, *January* 20, 1861

Your Thanksgiving dinner was nearly as good as ours. You lacked one dish: apple cobbler. This is a Missouri dish and something like our old pompernickel, only you eat it with a rich sauce. Jennie will no doubt send you the receipt as she learned it from John Owens who came up and helped her make it.

Christmas we had a nice lot of egg nog and cake and snow balling. The snow was two feet deep. The next day I went down to North Fork, intending to hunt but there was too much snow to climb the mountains. Got nothing but quail and squirrels. Since then Cap and I have cut wood pretty steadily. The team has just about paid expenses this month.

I think you have won a barren victory and I reckon

Abe would like to sell out. From all I hear from your side he will enter on his duties with part of the States and a part won't recognize him without attempting to justify the South in their action in seceding. Yet History will record the fact that the election of a Republican President broke up this glorious Confederacy. I wash my hands of it. Let what will come, I am innocent. If you attempt to coerce the seceding states you will have all the slave states united and how a war would affect you! You had better scrape together what you can and all come out here. It won't ruffle us, however. I have no doubt this thing had better be settled now if it comes to a fight. After you in the North shall have lost some blood and been ruined in business perhaps you will let the poor down trodden African hoe cotton in peace.

WEAVERVILLE, *June 2d*, 1861

We have just returned from church. Our church not being large enough for the crowd, services were held in our new theatre or Town Hall and who do you think we had to preach? 'T. Starr King.' He lectured last night in the same place to a large audience at a dollar per head, on Washington and our Union. It was beautiful beyond description. Language just flows from his mouth so easily. Everybody was in ecstasies. He held the audience spell bound for two hours. It was a great treat for us I assure you. Even the men from Virginia and Texas admired him although he lashed the Secessionists without mercy.

I had intended to write you at some length on politics but there are no longer any political parties. We are all either for this Government or against it. Although the sympathisers with the South, who are mostly from the Southern States, call themselves anti-coercion men they are rather few and far between. A Union meeting without

distinction of party was called here some time ago and nine tenths of the people rallied to the support of the Stars and Stripes. Our Orators just spread themselves and were all ready to shed from 40 drops to a gallon of blood in defence of the Government. Our band played the National Airs and the enthusiasm of the crowd was unbounded. We receive the news every three days by the Pony Express and of course have plenty to talk about. You may set us down as loyal to the Union. No matter whether this rebellion was caused by Northern Abolitionists or Southern Fire Eaters we won't discuss the matter but put it down at any sacrifice.

I liked the 'Marble Faun' set well. I got the House with the Seven Gables and read it. I like Hawthorne very much.

The garden looks dry. The month of May has been cold, windy and frosty but we had some apples, currants, peaches and a few plums and strawberries. These snow covered mountains are all very grand to look at and furnish water for the mines but they breathe death on the gardens. Summer has set in now, I think. We have just finished a new stable and corral (or cow yard) and have bought a cow and calf. For the first time since I left home. I have gone to milking. We have planted nearly all our garden in carrots for her benefit this winter. She will live about nine months out on grass here.

WEAVERVILLE, *July* 7, 1861

We have a good many arrivals from your side. Men are getting their families fast and since the war all the dissatisfied ones have made up their minds that this is their home for good. This is as it should be. All around town it is fast filling up with cottages, gardens. Orchards are growing up and we have water carried all over town in logs with a head so that it will squirt over the houses.

This water is taken by nearly every family, at a dollar per week. All we want now to be a city is a corporation and gas. Our streets are sprinkled every morning and Weaverville is said to be the liveliest town in the mountains. Long may she wave and oak wood bring 12 dollars a cord! It is only worth eight now.

WEAVERVILLE, *September* 29, 1861

I received yours of August last week. You don't seem to be so full of war as you were last Spring. I hope your people are not letting down. Now we have just gotten started. I did not suppose last Spring that we should be called upon for any men but they are raising six regiments in this State, probably to go to the southern part of the State and Arizona. We have done our duty. I have just returned from escorting our Volunteers out of town. We raised a company of seventy six men and $1,065 to send them below and fit them out. Isn't that doing pretty well?

Doctor Scott, a secession Presbyterian Minister at San Francisco, has had to resign. He was hung in effigy in front of his church and it took all the police in San Francisco to protect him in his pulpit last Sunday.

While you write about local affairs and seem to ignore the war, I haven't anything else to write about. We don't talk about anything else and we can't understand why it is that the Northern States are outnumbered apparently in every engagement. Why is it that 20 millions of people with plenty of money, the sea open to them, can't contend with seven millions and all their ports blockaded?

I have great confidence in '*McClellan*.' He is just about my age but there is considerable difference in our positions about this time. If he wins this fight he will be the greatest man in the Union. Nobody here has any confidence in Fremont and we are anxiously waiting to hear of his being taken and hung.

Well, I hope everything will go right but it looks decidedly gloomy. If you had seen the men who turned out here this morning you would think that we could furnish a regiment or two — all men used to camp life and in their prime and good shots. We have the arms and fixings for sixty men, marine rifles and sword bayonets. I turned out with them this morning and felt like marching to Sacramento or as long as the band would play. You know I have a passion for following bands of music.

WEAVERVILLE, *November* 3, 1861

Only think of a wire all the way from Bucksport to Weaverville! It makes me feel a great deal nearer to you. I don't suppose I shall ever receive or send a dispatch over it but then it is a satisfaction to know that we can.

Since I wrote we have sent another company of Volunteers. Some of our best men went in this company and the ladies presented them with a flag and a ball was given them on the eve of their departure, but they won't see much War after all as the regular troops have been sent east and these regiments will garrison the forts here and in Oregon. This makes 150 men from Trinity County who have enlisted. We feel rather down in the mouth about the War. We haven't gained a point yet and from all accounts of our progress we shall be a good many years enforcing the laws in the seceded states. Whether this is owing to mismanagement or to our troops being afraid of getting hurt, I don't know. But it is certain that we have not won a fight of any consequence yet.

I have just gotten 'Great Expectations' and several of Trollope's works sent to San Francisco by our Bookstore Man for them. I am also reading the 12th volume of the Pacific Railroad Exploration, written by I. I. Stevens, Tinkham, McClellan, and others. It is illustrated handsomely like the one I got in Washington and is very in-

teresting. I read Harpers and sometimes see the Atlantic Monthly, but not regularly. It is getting to be full of abolition articles, Sumner's doctrines and Theodore Parker. I don't subscribe to it. They are just as much enemies of the Constitution and the Union as Jeff Davis and the rest and should all be hung together and if ever this difficulty is settled at the South I hope the people will settle their hash effectually at home. I have always regarded 'Charles Sumner' as one of the greatest *humbugs* in New England — an atheist philosopher — and you can tell John Hale of N.H. that if that little anecdote about a secessionist assaulting him in the depot when he arrived home lately is true, we have gotten through with him — a man who will go to Congress and vote for millions of men and money to carry on a war and then go home and let one of the enemy attack him and not strike back, losing the chance of killing one or whipping him at any rate. Well, he won't do. I don't want to hear any such man as that talk about whipping the South into the traces.

WEAVERVILLE, *December* 15, 1861

I send you a part of the Journal instead of writing a long account of the flood. You will probably see an account of the overflow at Marysville and Sacramento. It was worse than '49 when I cruised around in a boat, as there were more people and property. I never have lived anywhere yet but what the flood has affected me more or less. The sawmill that I built at North Fork floated off this time but I did not own it. But still back of the house is a small stream called Garden Gedde. I built my house on the bank and a hen house just on the edge of the stream. The old bed of the stream has been all filled up with tailings from the mines and it runs anywhere and cuts a channel either close to the bank or a hundred feet

off. During this freshet it took a sheer into our side, close to the hen house. We watched it all the morning getting larger and larger, until it was quite a respectable river and about four o'clock, horrible to relate, it cut away the foundation and it pitched over into the roaring torrent. There were two hens in it at the time, one in the act of laying. One escaped through the door and the other went floating down stream. I ran down and she stranded about 100 yds below. I rescued her from a watery grave and then and there waded after the box and nest and secured the egg. The hen house was a total wreck and I have had to build a new one.

This is all my losses and adventures this flood.

WEAVERVILLE, *April* 6, 1862

Our sorrow at the news of Sewall's death was mingled with joy last Monday night, at the birth of a little girl baby. Jennie was delighted at its being of the feminine gender and especially delighted at 'having it through with' so comfortably.

I have thought much of you and Father and Mother lately, mourning for Sewall. In looking into the future I always thought of meeting him again, somewhere, and becoming better acquainted with him as a man. I seem to remember him now as a boy and I have no idea of him a shipmaster. We have been separated so much since we started out in the world that I really know very little about him. I fear it was a great blow to Father and Mother. Tell me how they bear it.

I will conclude with a lock of hair from the precious baby, for its grandmother, Jennie says. She is getting along finely.

WEAVERVILLE, *October* 29, 1862

This is very near the fourth anniversary of our mar-

riage. The years slip by quickly and Jennie begins to think we shall hardly be able to visit home in five years but she is very well contented and we make a very good living, are able to indulge occasionally in the vintage of California in the shape of bottles of wine beautifully put up by 'Keller' of 'Los Angeles' and what is best of all, we are surrounded by the best of friends and neighbors.

Weaverville, *January* 3, 1863

Winter has at last set in, in earnest, but we are pretty well provided for it. We have about 2000 lbs. of apples left, which we expect to get a good price for. I bought a quarter of beef for 4 cts a pound, cheaper than ever I knew it in any country and corned it. Beef is retailing here for 6, 8 and 10 cts., but coffee, sugar and foreign products are high enough.

I have been looking over my journal that I keep for the year past and I find that there have been forty one births, eleven marriages and 19 deaths in town. The lowest reading of the thermometer was on January 31st, 10° above zero; the highest, August 3d, 102° above. The average is about 50°. We had eighty six days without rain in succession and 122 without frost, a temperate climate truly. We are about 3,000 feet above the level of the sea.

We don't take so much interest in the War because we have gotten used to it, I suppose. Nearly all the Union men here felt relieved when McClellan was relieved of his command. He was a great favorite of mine at the start. I liked the man's appearance and habits, from all the little sketches I read of him and I liked his proclamations or bulletins to the army. They sounded something like Napoleon's, and I really hoped that he had some of his genius, but alas for our hero, he couldn't sustain the part.

I hope the War will be prosecuted and I am willing to do my part toward prosecuting it, to the end, till the

South is conquered, annihilated, made a desert of, if need be. I would accept no terms of peace but unconditional surrender — come back into the Union as you are without any compromise or yielding on the part of the free States, if it takes five years to do it. I want the programme carried out — them's my sentiments and that is the platform of the Union Party in California.

WEAVERVILLE, *February* 26, 1863

We are doing considerable in the military line here, just now. All my amusement this winter has been the 'Halleck Rifles.' We drilled two evenings in the week and since we have gotten our uniforms, once in two weeks we take the theatre, invite all our lady friends and after drill have a dance. The ladies appreciate us highly. Thirty-five of them contributed recently and sent to San Francisco and got a beautiful silk flag. This was presented to us by Mrs. Fagg. She was supported by Mrs. Greenhood and Mrs. Buck. We had a large party and after the performance, a dance.

We have just gotten over celebrating the 22nd of February, or rather, the 23d, as we took Monday. About six miles from here is Douglas City on Trinity River and quite a smart town in itself. They have a military company, the 'Douglas City Rifles,' that got up the celebration: a dinner and a military ball, and invited the people of Weaverville to come down and enjoy their hospitalities. But more especially they sent a polite challenge to our company to drill with them and shoot at a target with them, eat with them and dance with them and last but not least, drink with them. Determined not to be outdone in all these accomplishments we accepted and went down in full feather. Some fifteen ladies accompanied us and we took the brass band and were received with all the honors.

We shot one shot apiece at the target, 100 yds, for a silver medal and seven best shots were scored for the 'Hallecks.' One of our privates won the medal, hitting 3/21 of an inch from the center. We then marched to dinner and were supplied with an unlimited amount of grub and champagne. After several patriotic toasts and speeches, it was observed that most of the boys, instead of sipping their wine at a toast, drank a whole tumblerful and as there were a great many toasts yet to come it was thought best to adjourn as we wished to make a good appearance at the Ball.

The Ball was given at their Armory, a hall large enough for ten sets of cotillions. It was rather crowded. There was quite a display of new dresses by the Douglas City ladies, gotten up especially for the occasion — to say nothing of the brass buttons, shoulder straps and sashes of us military men. The dancing lasted from eight till four in the morning; supper eleven till two. As all the company could not sit down at once, it is reasonable to suppose that everybody got their fill of both. Jennie left the baby asleep at the house of Doctor White, close by the hall. Mrs. White went to the Ball and the Doctor staid at home to take care of their three children, who were all abed and asleep. After awhile I went over to see if the baby had waked up and found the Doctor had his hands full.

It seems that Mrs. White had told all the ladies to leave their babies there and they had left them asleep and gone to the dance. First one had wakened and cried and that woke another and so on. There must have been at least eight or ten in the house. The Doctor had one in his arms, crying; was rocking a cradle containing another, crying. A third was crying in a bed close by and a fourth in a room adjoining, and the Doctor was rushing frantically from one to the other, patting them and hushing them.

Jennie and I sat there and tried to help him and laughed till we cried. Such a concert! You couldn't hear yourself speak. Having guessed pretty nearly their respective mothers, I ran over to the supper room where they were peaceably devouring roast pig and chicken, and commenced calling: 'Mrs. Estes, your baby is crying!' 'Mrs. Walters, your baby is crying!' 'Mrs. Cochrane, your baby's nearly having fits!' and so on and away they went. In the meantime we slipped into a couple of vacant seats and took supper with our baby, who, I wish you to understand, is a remarkably sensible baby and doesn't cry.

Well, to record all the fun and sights that we had and saw at that Ball isn't in the limits of a sheet of paper. Mrs. Houghs was taken with hysterics about one o'clock and had to be carried home. Cause: jealousy. Her husband went to supper with another woman, so the other women say. Aunt Lucy was the last woman to leave the floor. Our Orderly Sergeant, a staid and respectable man of family, was found at five o'clock in the morning trying to get some one to whistle for him to dance by. Abe Loffman, a fancy dry goods man, fell into a ditch all over, or all under, and ruined his clothes.

After breakfast we marched out of town, cheered for everything and everybody and rode home. Made a grand entree into Weaverville, band playing 'Yankee Doodle' and 'John Brown' None killed. None wounded. But several missing.

CAMP ELLIS, *November* 1, 1863

Here I am in the Army at last. The State here makes all the volunteer companies go into camp once a year for ten days for instruction. This is the encampment of the 5th Brigade and is held near Red Bluffs so we are 80 miles from Weaverville. The State furnishes transportation, arms, grub, tents, instructors and everything and the

same pay as the United States army and we are under the same discipline. We have lost our identity and are known as Company G. We are turned out at half past five, drill an hour, breakfast and dress parade at half past eight, drill at ten, dinner at one, drill from two till half past four, dress parade at sunset, tattoo half past eight, taps and all lights out at nine. So you see we are kept busy and we are all perfectly satisfied and delighted with the School of the Battalion. I take a great interest in it and although only a Sergeant in my company, I consider myself competent to take command of a company. Our military instructor is a Major Hill, a regular army officer and a splendid one, he is.

We are encamped on Red Bank Creek and in front of us the Sacramento Valley spreads out a level plain as far as the eye can reach.

I suppose the California boys can fall into camp life and enjoy it better than any you ever saw, as we have all been more or less used to it except the military part of it and that they learn very fast and Major Hill compliments us very much, especially in the firings. We are all used to handling guns and the whole battalion fires like one man.

On Tuesday we expect the Governor and staff to a grand review and Wednesday we break up camp and march into Red Bluffs. In the Evening the citizens give us a ball. I expect we shall feel lost when we get home and take off our uniforms and go to work again and we shall long remember the good times at Camp Ellis.

Weaverville, *May*, 1864

We are looking for great events now in Virginia and I only hope Grant will be successful. I am afraid this war will end yet and I not see any of it and I almost regret sometimes that I am not there but perhaps it is for the best. I may be of more use to the country at some future

time. I had almost determined to leave here this Spring anyway and last Winter I commenced writing to my friends in different parts inquiring how they were getting along and what chance there was for me, etc. I also saw a great many from Idaho, Colorado, Washoe, Ruse, Humboldt, etc., and from all I could learn I was just about as well off and had made as much money as any of them. When one makes money we always hear of it, but thousands are still looking for it and even suffering for the necessaries of life and those we don't hear of.

Just about this time I bought out the ice business which is a monopoly here and so I am fixed for another season. Last season this business amounted to $850. I don't think it will be as much this year. I can attend to it with very little trouble and we have already been up and put the house full of ice. We take it from a little pond on top of the mountain about seven miles from our house. I went up on the 20th of April and rode. I left the thermometer at 80° and everything in full bloom down here. About two miles from the top I struck the snow and rode till within half a mile of the pond and then had to tie my mule and go on foot as the snow had gotten to be three feet deep. It was six feet at the ice house and after digging down to the ice I found about one foot of clear ice.

We have had the mildest winter ever known all over the State. In ordinary seasons there would have been 20 feet of snow up there at this time and the ice is always cut in the fall. People who have lived in New Orleans say the past winter here has been just like that climate. Our peach trees were in blossom the 20th of March and as usual, we had a cold frost in April and it killed them nearly all, but the other fruit escaped. At this time roses are in bloom.

I am setting out tomatoes. Cherries are as big as bullets. Peas are just forming the pods. Everything is just

where it is with you the last of June, but you have only to go forty miles down to Shasta and there they have had green peas long ago. Strawberries are just coming on and they are just as much ahead of us as we are of you.

I had a letter from John Benson last winter. He resides in San Francisco; is one of the trustees of the 'Citizens Gas Co.' and says he is doing very well. He wants me to come and take his Ranch in Napa Valley but when he went on to say that he could not sell it and had rented it for $300 a year and never got any rent and never expected to, I thought it must be a poor chance.

WEAVERVILLE, *June* 12, 1864

We have been receiving glorious news from Grant and Sherman lately. Grant seems to be the *man* we have been looking for so long, a military genius. The nomination of Lincoln we looked for. He was the choice of this State. Fremont has not disappointed us at all. You will gradually find out what we have all along known here in California, that he is an unmitigated scoundrel and will fervently pray to be forgiven for having voted for him in '56.

WEAVERVILLE, *September* 25, 1864

I see by the papers that you have had a dry spell in New England. Why don't you irrigate your gardens as we do? We have had no rain now for 100 days but our gardens have matured a full crop. We have a full crop of winter apples but generally the fruit crop was light this season. The frost was so late this Spring as to kill the wheat, on the 20th of June, in some places but our garden escaped. We never eat any grapes but what we say 'If we could only send some to our Mothers and friends down east.' We are having the most splendid muscats and black Hamburgs from our vines now that you ever

saw. In fact I doubt if you ever did see any grapes of these varieties.

We put up all our preserves now fresh, in self-sealing cans. There is a perfect mania among the women for putting up fresh fruit: peaches, plums, pears and tomatoes. This is all very fine for us who have fruit to sell. I sold my Bartlett pears for 15 cts a pound and one gardener sold 3000 lbs of plums. No family thinks themselves of any account that puts up from two to six dozen cans of one half gallon each, besides pickled peaches, dried string beans, green corn and tomatoes, grape jelly, etc.

The ice gave out the 9th of August. We made about 400 dollars out of it and if we go into it next year will try and make it last all the season as we might have sold as much more just as well as not.

The political campaign opened last night with a rousing Union meeting, addressed by Sam Brannan, a visitor. We are getting up a grand time when our candidate for Congress comes, John Bidwell. He is also our Brig. Gen. and commanded at our encampment last fall and is very popular and one of the best men in the State. We have ordered 112 dollars worth of fire works and a salute with the cannon, a torch light procession and both military companies are to turn out, the theatre is to be decorated and altogether we intend to make such a demonstration as will strike terror to the hearts of the Copper heads. McClellan's nomination was a bitter pill for what constituted the Democratic Party here, to swallow, as all their leaders are southern men, straight out Secesh. The ranks are filled with Irish and Dutch and a few renegade Yankees but they will all vote for him. We have no doubt about carrying this State for *Lincoln* and *Johnston.*

I don't know of anything of interest to write. Have you seen Adeline Wellendorf? Her husband sold all out the

other day. He had a drug store here. He was getting altogether too intimate with a certain Secesh family, consisting of a wife and sister of hers lately come from Dixie. As the boys say here 'He was a gay and festive cuss' and Adeline had better hunt him up as soon as possible. He has gone to San Francisco. We consider this a righteous judgment on Adeline as she annoyed poor Sarah Cole awfully, flirting with and receiving presents from Cole. You may tell Sarah of this the next time you see her as it will be, I know, like balm to her wounded soul.

WEAVERVILLE, *November* 13, 1864

Now that the smoke of the battle has passed away we will talk about the presidential campaign. Before this you have probably heard from California and we have gained on our majority of last year. I think it will be at least 20,000 this time. Nevada and Oregon both go for Lincoln. This has been the most exciting canvass I ever passed through. In fact we have paid our whole attention to it for the last six weeks. Early in the fall we organized a L. & J. Club, mounted our six pounder on a new carriage, raised a fine flagstaff and got up a grand demonstration to come off when our candidates for Congress and Elector came to address us. We sent to San Francisco and got torches, roman candles, rockets, etc., and invited all the County and his wife and children to come. We spent four hundred dollars getting this thing up and as a proof that it was gotten up in good shape I have only to say that your humble servant was chairman of the committee and Master of Ceremonies, generally.

We held our meeting in the theatre, the gallery filled with 200 ladies. We sang patriotic songs, cheered for everything Union and dispersed to wait for Election Day, and the result was we beat the enemy 84 votes in town and 200 in the County. Election day passed off very

quietly. In the evening as the results began to come in by telegraph we began to feel gay. At eleven o'clock if you could have looked into the Express Saloon you would have seen about 200 as gay and festive men as you ever saw. Two men stood on the bar, making speeches, while the crowd sang 'Johnny comes Marching Home.'

Two days after, the line worked to the Atlantic States and we heard that Lincoln had probably carried all but two or three and we brought out the artillery and fired 24 guns. Last night we heard that New York was very close but we firmly believe that Lincoln is elected. All I have to say is that whether or no, McClellan never will reign over this State. His election would produce war here immediately and it is shameful to think that a New England State can even be close on such a vote. I have no language to express my contempt for a Yankee Copperhead. We don't associate with them here. We have nothing in common. To show what that party is composed of here: they had a procession some time ago of 80 men, nine Americans, 71 Irish and Dutch. Most of the Southerners here did not vote for McClellan. They are consistent, outspoken rebels and one can talk with them.

WEAVERVILLE, *March* 19, 1865

I have begun gardening a little. My peas are just coming up and I have fixed my strawberry beds. We have had a cold, wet winter and the Spring is backward. If this town would increase and go ahead instead of backward I could do a good business with my garden and a fruit store but we are not gaining any.

Jones and I have read several novels aloud this winter for the benefit of our wives and families. With this and the newspapers, criticising the war and government and playing dominoes we have managed to pass the evenings at home very agreeably. As far as other society goes we

might as well have been miles from any neighbor for we have had no company nor visited any. Balls and other entertainments seem to be played out here.

What do you think at home of General Butler? Jones and I read all the reports and speeches, pro and con, and we think he has played himself out. I have always stood up for him on account of the Secessionists being so down on him, but I think it a good deliverance that he was not nominated and elected in Lincoln's place, as some wanted.

WEAVERVILLE, *April 27*, [1865]

We have lived during the past month, it seems to me, a lifetime, as regards history and remarkable events. We have laid aside all business and celebrated day and night. First came the capture of Richmond. I expect we got the news here just as soon as you did, of all the events. We decorated the town with flags and fired a salute. At the first gun the miners put down their picks and came in to hear the news and when they heard it they didn't go out and take them up again that day.

In the evening the ladies all assembled at the theatre and we had a dance.

Next, the surrender of Lee and his army. That caused even more rejoicing. We fired 100 guns. Everybody came in town and celebrated. The Copperheads even gave it up and some of them went to the dance in the evening. We had an immense ball, all gotten up on the spur of the moment — over 200 people present. I don't know when I have enjoyed one so much. We interspersed the dances with patriotic songs and everybody and his wife and all the little children were there and enjoyed themselves immensely.

Shall I describe the reception of the next event — the assassination of the President. We got the first intimation of it at two o'clock that day but did not get all the par-

ticulars until about eight. We could hardly believe the first report but in the evening we had all the particulars to his dying at 22 minutes past seven that very morning. The crowd listened as it came word by word and we all looked and felt as though we were hearing of the death of some of our families, some near relative in the States. Probably no man since Washington was ever so mourned. In this far off State every little town was draped in black and Wednesday the 19th was observed by funeral ceremonies. In this place all business was suspended. We had a very large procession and both military companies marched to the theatre. Jones delivered a very good eulogy on the late President. We had music from our brass band and singing by a select choir suitable to the occasion. The Methodist Minister made the prayer and the Catholic Priest pronounced the benediction. We have about decided to quit all social intimacy with some of our Southern friends whom we have gotten along with up to this time by ignoring the subject of the war when we are in their company. They have taken no part in our rejoicing or in our mourning.

We have heard that one lady from Missouri made the remark that when she heard of Lee's surrender her heart failed her and she thought that God had forsaken them, but when she heard of the killing of the President she thought that God had again remembered them and was on their side — and there are many who think the same way. They have to rejoice over this event in their own houses and among themselves. They are very careful what they say on the street.

In San Francisco there was the most intense excitement and the crowd got even a little by destroying all the Democratic presses in the city. The general opinion here is that the Rebellion will not get off so easy at the hands of Andrew Johnson as it would if they had let Lincoln

live. I think the War will last some time yet on a small scale and it better last until they are all killed.

WEAVERVILLE, *September 11th*, 1865

We have not had a letter from Bucksport since six weeks. I wrote to Father about two weeks ago and told him something about my trip to Humboldt County in search of coal oil. I liked the country much and have since been trying to sell out here and move down there. Have not found a purchaser yet. I think I shall go and spend the winter whether I sell or not.

Eureka reminded me much of down East with the steam saw mills, ship yard and vessels laying at the wharves — so different from our place in the mountains. From Eureka going to the Mattole river is fifty miles and we rode most of the way on the beach with the surf washing our horses feet. At Cape Mendocino there are sea lions on the rocks. They are immense animals, something like a seal only they weigh from 800 to 1000 lbs. On Bear river and the Mattole is the oil country. There is every indication that petroleum exists here. Gas springs and oil springs abound and one well, only down 140 feet, already yields considerable oil.

There is a beautiful valley at the Mattole River, five or six miles back from the sea, containing about forty farms. The climate is fine, neither too hot nor too cold. Here is a town started called Petrolia and several wells being bored. I have an interest in a mile square of land between the two rivers right back of Cape Mendocino about seven miles from the Ocean. We shall incorporate a company as soon as there is a flowing well struck and sell shares.

Going from here to Humboldt we passed through an unsettled country for about seventy miles and had to camp out two nights. The mountain between the South

Fork of Trinity River and Mattole River is terrific: five miles up on this side, one mile on top and ten miles down to Mattole River. What do you think of that! It must be at least 8000 feet high and for forty miles in length it is as level as the ridge pole of a roof, about a mile wide and covered with grass. Here we found a hunters' paradise. Deer and bear and grouse abound. I frequently saw twenty deer in a band and no more trouble to shoot one than it would be to kill a sheep. I got off my horse and shot one right in the trail and during the day I killed two grouse. They are like a partridge and fine eating. The streams are full of trout. I caught seventy five trout in less than two hours and Hollister (the man who went down with me) caught eighty. The largest trout I caught would weigh a pound and a half but most of them are small.

You can imagine what an appetite I should have, riding all day, and the supper we had at night! We had bread along with us and broiled our venison and birds on the coals.

I must have ridden over three hundred miles when I got home and I gained nine pounds in flesh. Never felt so well in my life. I think Warren would like such a trip. The country through which we rode has been the theatre of the Indian War for the last five years but they have all come in and been placed on a reservation at the mouth of Trinity River, called Hoopa Valley. Last season Col. Black had 1100 troops here. Now there are about 600 stationed at different points. We didn't see any signs of Indians.

I have been busy since I came back, disposing of our fruit. We are surfeited with it: apples, pears and plums. The grapes we can dispose of. The market is glutted. Ten years ago an apple was worth 50 cts; now, 4 cts per lb. Plums, the most luscious green gages and egg plums,

are worth four cts. I have dried several hundred lbs and we have put up in self-sealing cans fifty gallons. Cap took 500 lbs to the Hay Fork Valley and sold them for 6 cts and there is lots left on the trees yet. You never saw such a sight as our plum trees were. They grew just like onions on a string. Four of us neighbors sent below and got a cider mill. It cost here 100 dollars. I have made about 50 gallons of cider and made 100 gallons for Mr. Hone. We sell the cider for a dollar a gallon and drink the most of it ourselves.

The Bartlett pear is the finest fruit to my taste. We put this up in cans and they are excellent. They grow here to perfection. Humboldt County beats the world for blackberries. In Eer River valley when they build a rail fence the blackberry bushes spring up and completely cover it. You can't see a rail, so each side of the road is literally lined with blackberries. The largest and the most juicy I ever ate — it is a fact that there are miles of the road like this. I didn't eat many blackberry pies — oh no!

You have heard of the Big Trees of course, in Calaveras County. In Humboldt there are some redwoods. We passed through a strip 12 miles wide of this forest. Just before you come to Hydesville they grow just as thick as they can stand and I saw many of them fifteen feet in diameter and three hundred feet high. Now don't think I am telling fish stories. I honestly think I saw trees larger than this, for some of them had blown down and they were higher than my head, sitting on a horse and there is one at Trinidad, a short distance above Eureka, burnt out hollow that you can ride through on horseback. The bark and leaf of this tree resemble hemlock but the wood is red cedar, splits very freely and makes excellent shingles, rails and lumber of all kinds.

Jennie wishes me to say to you to tell her folks she has

not had a letter for eight weeks. That she is enormously stout, weighs 125 lbs, and has her hair cut off, shingled short and is prettier than she was when she was married, so everybody tells her. The children are well. Em Lu is singing 'John Brown' and Arthur can say all his letters.

WEAVERVILLE, *November* 20, 1865

I received a letter from you some time since and by the way you wrote I think you will be surprised to see this letter dated at Weaverville but I have not left yet. I tried hard to sell out but could not get an offer. Houses and lots sell here for about $400 and anything worth more very seldom changes hands. Everybody is going away at some time and nobody wants to invest in a good permanent home. 'That's what's the matter' in this mining county. In the cow counties it is different.

I had to smile when I read of your wonder as to how I supported my family on such slender means. That is the beauty of living in California and I couldn't explain it to you in a letter, but the fact is nobody is poor here and nobody very rich. There is no caste in society here and the miner and the man who works for wages live in just as good houses and eat and drink and wear the same things as the merchant. I can remember hearing at home of one family who couldn't afford to have as fine things as another family though they were equally refined and intelligent, but the man working here for sixty dollars a month or mining or farming on his own account, affords just the same things as one of our merchants or County Officers who may be worth ten thousand dollars.

If you go to a ball you will see the daughter of Mrs. Dockery, who takes in washing, dressed in just about the same fabrics as the wife of Mr. Tinnin, one of our merchants, though perhaps not in as good taste. When a man 'makes a raise' as we call getting from ten to forty

thousand dollars, as the case may be, he takes it and leaves. Generally he goes to San Francisco for there he can board at the Occidental and make a splurge but he can't put on airs here. So you see this is the country for a poor man but a bad place for a rich man.

I see people from Humboldt frequently. No flowing well has been struck yet but they are all sanguine and going on. Several of them yield a little oil of excellent quality. The crude oil selling in San Francisco for 1 dollar per gallon, has created a great revolution in that county. Farms have doubled in value and everything is prosperous.

I suppose you have seen accounts of the earthquake at San Francisco. It was a right smart shock and one more twist on the lever would have levelled the city to the ground. The people who were in the Churches at the time evidently were not quite ready to go, by the way they piled over each other to get out. We don't feel any up here. They seem to be more severe on the coast.

Weaverville, *January* 18, 1866

I received yours of December 11th last night and this being a stormy day, thought I would write to you.

I advised Jennie to take a short walk this morning as it would remind her forcibly of Bucksport, the wind blowing fresh from the northwest and snowing thick. We have had considerable snow. Not more than eight inches here but enough on the mountains to stop staging between here and the outside world.

We had a Thanksgiving but no turkey was to be had. We had chickens and mince pies and one friend of ours besides our own family, a miner from East Fork who appreciated a good dinner.

Just before Christmas I took the mules to a ranch, fifty miles down Trinity River, to spend the winter where

the snow does not lay on the ground and the grass at that season was coming up green and fresh. I stopped and hunted deer a few days and spent Christmas at Big Flat with some friends where we had a shooting match, a nice turkey dinner and a ball. At home, Jennie had a Christmas tree for the children and there was a ball for the benefit of the School fund which netted $475. But the holidays are not the gay and festive times they used to be in Weaverville. The great crowd of loose miners are gone to Carriboo, Idaho, and Montana and the gold miners are letting up. The saloons look deserted and we have settled down into a quiet country village.

RED BLUFF, *May 14th*, 1867

I received yours of, I forget the date but the first letter I have had from you for a long time anyway and have been so busy I have not had time to write. You will excuse me, I know, when you know that I have gotten into business in earnest.

My time is fully occupied from six in the morning till dark and two or three days in the week I am riding after cattle. Our sales last month were almost $1,000 and I think this month will exceed that but cattle are so high and we have an opposition shop to contend with that the profits are not as great as they should be. Still we are making more than our expenses.

I have bought a horse and sixteen hogs the past month from the profits and my expenses are no more than my board was at the Hotel, thirty one dollars a month. We have rented a very pretty place with a garden and we shall raise all the peaches and grapes we can eat. Jennie laughs at the peaches she saw at home but some things she likes better, the houses and the absence of dust, which is a great nuisance here. It hasn't rained for a month and no prospect of any more till next fall. The weather is

just right to sit out on the piazza in your shirt sleeves and sleep with the windows open. Green peas, radishes, turnips, onions and strawberries are in season and summer is upon us already. Jennie dreads the hot weather but I like it. I can stand it up to 100° very well. I worked out in the sun last summer and it had no bad effect on me and when I can be in the shade it is never too warm. The flies are the worst part of it and we lose more or less beef although we have a meat safe and cellar, but you can't corn any meat here after this.

Tell Mother I cleaned a tripe with lime after her receipt and it was very easily done but it doesn't pay to sell them for 12½ cts a lb, which is all the steamboat pays and they are about all that want them. Curious people here about eating. All want sirloin steaks. Lots of families never buy a roast or boiling beef. I believe their wives are too lazy to cook, that's what.

All my desire now is to accumulate *hogs*. I have thirty — seven breeding sows and I ought to have sixty by next fall. Then I shall buy every one that I can get cheap as I have the money to spare and when the wheat is harvested hire a field and put them in to fatten and kill them next winter. I paid hundreds of dollars for hogs last winter and sold them for a small profit. You see it will make quite a difference if I raise them and we have enough feed at the slaughter house to keep thirty.

RED BLUFFS, *September 13th*, 1867

Such a chapter of accidents has befallen our most intimate friends that if you knew them as I do, I could relate a most startling and sensational letter....

The last was a tragedy in Weaverville. Johnny Murphy is County Judge and always supposed to be a very nice young man. An Especial favourite of Mrs. Sarah Griffin, our next door neighbor when we lived

there. He called and spent the evening there the other night, and it turned out he later called on a young girl, Ellen D——, got into her window, undressed himself to his undershirt and turned in. Her father suspected something, it seems, and burst into the room with a knife and stabbed Johnny through the lung and in the back twice before he got out of the window. He ran down the street pursued by the enraged papa and jumped the fence into Griffith's yard. Griffith opened the door, and Murphy, nearly frightened to death, ran into the house and into Sarah's bedroom where she was putting the baby to bed. What her feelings were at seeing a man, naked, covered with blood, bursting into her room that way can be better imagined than described. Poor Johnny was fearfully cut and just lived through it. His career is probably ended up there. All these events have happened within the last month, and every day when I get home Jennie meets me with, 'Well, what has happened?' 'Who's ruined now?' Nothing has happened to me so far except my old enemy Doty has started another butcher shop, but it has not hurt me much yet. Now if this letter is not equal to the 'Police Gazette' I am mistaken, and all are facts.

RED BLUFF, *October 29th*, 1867

I received a letter from you a short time ago, which reminded me that I have not written for a great while, I believe. Since then we have moved and already the household stuff begins to accumulate, as I started with one wagon load and took away three. We have rented a nice house and bought the parlor furniture at a bargain. It was formerly occupied by a Jew merchant who has gone to San Francisco, where we all expect to go before we die. We have a fireplace which is a great comfort, as the climate here is so warm you only need a little fire morning and evening and I do so like to sit and look in

the fire and you can burn all the big chunks that you can get in the stove.

I believe I have ridden a thousand miles on horseback this past year. The last ride I drove eighty-three hogs fifteen miles and was two days. They are the slowest of all creatures when they are fat. We are going to make hams and pickled pork out of them. Hogs are very cheap. I bought these for four cts live weight and hope to make something out of the speculation. Cattle are high: eight cts a pound, so we encourage people to eat pork. I expect to feast on spare ribs, tenderloins and sausages shortly.

RED BLUFF, *November 27th*, 1867

I received your last letter the other day and one just after Jennie arrived home. I ought to have answered it, I know, but I write Jennie every steamer and really have nothing of interest to write you as I suppose you see her often and she mentions you and your family in every letter.

In your last letter you seem to want to know if I am paying Jennie's board at her father's and hint that I ought to do it. Now, I don't know anything about the circumstances of the family but they have been urging her to come home and stay as long as she likes for two or three years past and I guess are perfectly willing to board her for her company and I think she isn't much trouble to them and is worth her board. As long as they don't complain and she would know better than you about it, why, I shan't trouble myself. I intended to have sent for her in October but changed my plans and bought into this business or rather bought the whole of it, as the man whom I have for a partner had no money. I had to furnish all the capital but he is a splendid butcher and I could not get along and I had rather have him for a partner

than hire all my help and then, I want to satisfy myself about the business. So far I have gotten along first rate and it pays us good wages and we have been to a good deal of expense in starting, as we had to get another slaughter house and a stock of hogs and hay and feed, etc. Raising hogs at the slaughter house is as profitable almost as the shop in time, so I shall not have the money to spare to send for Jennie this winter.

Red Bluff is a very pleasant place, the head of navigation and in the midst of a fine farming country and will always be a place of some importance. All we want to make business good is more population, more farmers and less running after new gold excitements. This state has peopled Idaho and British Columbia and Montana, but they are almost played out. I don't hear of any new excitement this winter. I have never run after any of them and am probably just as well off. If a person has Luck you can make money as well in one place as another. In a pecuniary point of view I haven't had much. Things don't fall my way somehow and just now I should like to have a little more money than I can raise but we always had all we wanted and a pleasant home and were in pretty good luck to raise enough for Jennie to go home on and if I can get her back again I can do well enough. If not I shall have to go to her for I am not going to live separated long. I miss my home more than most men, I think. Perhaps we are more attracted to each other, for if ever there were two persons better mated than Jennie and myself I have never seen them.

I am trying to benefit by my experience in the past and conduct this business so as to make something. I have been too liberal. There is none of the Yankee shrewdness about me. People never guess that I came from New England. Now, I am going to try to be a Jew from this out. As far as I have noticed the men who make money

here are Jews, mean men and thieves. I am going to turn over a new leaf and try it for a while so you need not expect me to pay my wife's board as long as she can sponge on her relatives. That is one point and if you could see the sausages we work up and sell for 20 cts a lb you would see another point. I am satisfied it is the only way to succeed.

I should have presented you with a service of silver on your twenty fifth wedding day only I needed the silver to buy cattle. Allow me to congratulate you all the same. I should like to give magnificent presents and I believe I should if I had the means but the wrong men get the means.

RED BLUFF, *December* 26, 1868

We Yankees seem to run together better than with people from other parts. I have lived and mixed with people from all parts of the world but still I like the New England character. When I am traveling and looking for a place to stay over night I feel at home when I strike a Yankee. This talk about free hearted Western men and Southern hospitality is a good deal like Southern chivalry: a humbug. I shall always be a Yankee, and hail from Maine, although few people ever guess the fact, who knew me. Our children will be distinctly Californian. They get their language and ideas in a great measure from the Public Schools and children that they associate with.

RED BLUFF, *March 19th*, 1869

I received a letter from you about three weeks ago and started the next day for Sacramento with a drove of cattle.

We had the most lovely weather; our spring, the trees were just leaving out and the fruit orchards in bloom. We went down in eight days and then I went down to

San Francisco to see John Benson. John had been back about two months and looks well. He wrote for me to come down and go to White Pine, the new silver land that has just been discovered about half way between California and Salt Lake. It is creating a great excitement here and thousands are leaving like the old days of /49. John thought I had better try my luck again and generously offered to furnish the cash, either to prospect for a claim or to go into any business I may find. I accepted his offer and he fixed matters so I can draw on him for any money I may want when I see a good thing. John has all his money in real estate and stocks and has an income, I should think (he did not tell me exactly) of at least two thousand a month. He says he has all the money he wants and wants me to make a fortune. He is certainly one of the rich relatives that you read about. You don't often meet them in real life. I spent two days with him and came back to Sacramento.

Chandler bought a buggy wagon and harness and I hitched our riding horses to it and rode home, 140 miles, in three days and a half. I have been the whole length of the Sacramento valley, from Shasta to the Bay, this trip. I went on the cars from Sacramento to Vallejo, a new route and from there by boat to San Francisco in four hours. Soon the railroad will be extended the whole length of the valley. To go to White Pine I shall go to Sacramento and take the Central Pacific R.R. over the mountains to a town called Elko, 480 miles. Thence by stage to Treasure City 100 miles. This town is on top of a mountain of silver, nearly 9000 feet above the sea.

I saw some of the ore from the Eberhardt mine at San Francisco that pays $20,000 to the ton; over half silver. I expect to find one like this. The ore passes out there for currency, in chunks.

It is estimated that there will be 50,000 people there by

the first of July. I shall leave here in about a week and Jenny Buck will remain here for the present. It only takes four days to go there and she can join me as soon as I get located. She is as anxious to go as I am.

ELKO, *April* 9, 1869

I promised in my last to write to you an account of my ride over the mountains.

I left Red Bluff on the boat and was in Sacramento in twenty four hours. Staid there two days. The Pacific R.R. has made this quite a place. They claim to have 25,000 people; are building a fine Capitol that will cost over a million and the machine shops for the railroad are on a large scale. The place is growing rapidly and has the prettiest residences and gardens of any place in the State.

Here we rolled our blankets and took a carpet bag and bought a ticket for this place, paying therefor ten cts a mile: $46.50, an awful price considering the government built the road. We left at half past six A.M. and rode through a beautiful country: fruit trees all in bloom and the grass six inches high.

At noon we stopped at Cisco and took dinner. Here the snow was three feet deep and you could easily imagine yourself in the pine forests of Maine. From here the road is covered with a shed framed with heavy timber for twenty three miles. They light up the cars although it is not very dark. Of course you know this is to keep the snow from sliding off the mountain as the road is graded in the side of the hill and if slides happen they pass over. At the summit is a tunnel 1700 feet and you come out right above Donner Lake. They call them all lakes here. This one is about as large as Toddy Pond in Orland. It was frozen over. We wound around the mountain entirely around the lake, passed through several more tunnels and

then followed the valley of the Truckee river down to the great desert.

Just out of the snow we came to the town of Truckee, a place that reminds me of Oldtown. Here are thirty saw mills making ties and lumber for the railroad. It is quite a town and a busy place.

At sundown we were at Wadsworth on the edge of the desert and took supper. I thought of the journey I made over the mountains in '50 with a pack train. I was thirteen days from Sacramento to this point then. The next morning at daylight we were a long way up the Humboldt river which flows from the North East and sinks in the desert.

You might as well ride over this country in the night as day for it is a vast plain of sand, sage brush and alkali. The ground in places is literally white with saleratus. The valley of the Humboldt is not much better all the way to this place. We took in water twice from tanks but out on the cars and the wood has to be all brought out also. So you see there isn't much to describe as to country.

I will speak well of the C.P.R.R. The cars are first class, from Springfield, Mass.; run smooth. They stop half an hour to eat. We arrived at half past one. You would not imagine you were going up hill when riding out but you do ascend over 7000 feet in 100 miles.

The R.R. is a great thing for the Indians. They ride free. They live around the stations and beg for two bits from the passengers. They come into town on every freight train and cut wood. The squaws wash and sell fish and dress in fine clothes but they don't get drunk and so far they are ahead of the whites.

There are about 60 miles to build and then the connection will be made. Probably this will be done in the next twenty days. At present the overland stage starts

from here and goes over two hundred miles around, through Salt Lake. This town is the distributing point for the mines at White Pine. I am still 120 miles from Treasure City. Six stages leave daily when the cars arrive, fare $50 and go through in twenty four hours. The R.R. won't buy any lumber until the road is built and as nothing grows here but sage brush the houses are built of canvas, with two or three exceptions. There are probably 150 houses or tents and one or two thousand people here. Prices are moderate. We lodge for fifty cts and dine luxuriously at the French restaurant for seventy five. Eating houses, lodging houses and whisky shops abound. The stores contain every article you can call for. We have fresh salmon and green peas from California every day.

We have several families and a great many women that ain't families. Children and dogs are scarce and I haven't seen a chicken or a hog in the place. Trains of freight from the railroad, ties and iron, are passing through every hour which makes the place look civilized and the ox teams and horse teams are immense.

I found a great many old friends. One man, Charles Lindley, that I haven't seen for sixteen years, recognized me and says I look just the same. As I did not think much of paying fifty dollars for riding in the stage, I looked around for a day or two for something to turn up. It turned up in this way: a Mexicana: Antonio, who used to pack to Weaverville for me years ago, found me. He has a team of thirty mules and wished me to get him a freight for White Pine where he has been for some months. I have got him a load and shall put on two tons of barley on my own account. If I have luck I shall get there for nothing and make $100 on my barley as he gives me a mule to ride. We start tomorrow.

I write this in a barroom on a board and if you can read

it you will do well. When I write again I will describe these famous mines where we hear so much about the 'Eberhardt' the 'Hidden Treasure' and the 'Aladin's lamp.' A man gave me a piece of rock the other day that came from the 'Eberhardt' that contains 10 dollars in silver to the pound.

Haven't heard from Jennie since I left. Will tell you how to direct a letter to me in my next. Love to all the folks. Pray for me, that a fortune may yet come to

Your unlucky brother.

TREASURE CITY, *April 23d*, 1869

I arrived last Sunday and had found in the office of the Recorder an old California newspaper and have the privilege of sitting in an armchair in a comfortable room for the first time since I left Sacramento.

I will try to give you some account of the country and a little history of the mines. You remember when we went to school of seeing on the map a lake called the great Salt Lake and then a yellow space named 'unexplored region.' This is about the center of that country. It is laid out on an immense scale: a vast plain intersected by ranges of mountains running north and south. We followed a plain or valley for 120 miles south from the railroad. The mountains on each side rise abruptly at an angle of nearly 45 degrees; ten and twelve thousand feet high; covered with snow. The water finds its way to the middle of the plain and forms a chain of lakes. There is no outlet. Although this plain extends to the Colorado River when we get to the White Pine mountain the lake ends and beyond are more. When you look on this valley from a distance it looks to be a beautiful valley but in reality it is covered with rank grass and sage brush and white with alkali.

At the White Pine Mountain we leave the plains and

go up a canon about six miles to a flat, where the town of Hamilton stands, at the foot of Treasure Hill. This is the County Seat and centre of things generally. It contains perhaps two hundred houses and lots of buildings going up every day. The street is crowded with teams and pack mules and the saloons and stores filled with men. Petticoats are very scarce. Going through the Main Street you ascend the Hill, on a good graded road three miles and come into the Main Street of Treasure City, built on a side hill just under the top. This place is better built and larger than Hamilton. A great many of the buildings are of stone. Here is a telegraph line, a daily paper, good hotels, magnificent whisky saloons, stores filled with everything you can call for and it has all been done since January 1st, 1869.

Here we are 9,000 feet above the level of the sea. The view is magnificent, as you can see for hundreds of miles if the power of sight will reach that far. Here are more men. You have to elbow your way through the street, the crowd is so great.

The mines are all around. The very rock they are building houses with contain silver. All over the side of the hill men are boring, drilling and blasting rock.

Going through the town the street comes to the jumping off place and you follow a trail down among the rocks. About four hundred feet down is the Eberhardt and about five hundred feet above is the *Hidden Treasure* mine; about a mile further down is the California and right along side of the street is the Nevada. On chloride flat, just below the town, is the Stonewall. There are a thousand more but these are being worked and are of the richest. No such ore was ever found in Potosi or Mexico as comes from these mines. I wish I could send you some specimens as I have had given me. The ore from the Stonewall is hard silver and you can cut it with

a knife, just as bright as a dollar. The Eberhardt is black as ink and some of it so rich you can hammer it out. It is also highly colored, green and yellow. This is called chloride and is found all over the hill. The Eberhardt is covered with a large house and has two shafts sunk 160 feet. Piled up in one end of the house is about 200 tons of this black rock. If you should see it lying round down East you would not pick it up, but that pile of rock contains one million dollars in silver. The mill is about three miles down the mountain where they haul the ore. It is reduced to fine powder by stamps and then amalgamated with quicksilver in large tubs, then retorted and melted into bars.

Some two years ago a party of men were putting up a mill on a mine about fifteen miles west from here, called the Monte Christo. An Indian came along one day and wanted something to eat. The blacksmith, a man by the name of Laddie, gave him some and he gave Laddie some rock. After the Indian was gone he tried the rock and found it very rich. In about ten days the Indian came back and he told him if he would show him a mine as good as that he would give him a horse. The Indian piloted Laddie and the surprised Marchant to what is now known as the 'Hidden Treasure' mine. They located it 600 feet and took some 40 lbs of the rock to Austin where it was assayed and found to be very rich.

Then Eberhardt, a Dutchman, and a party came over. He found the mine that bears his name and stuck a stake and located 800 feet on one side for his friends and 400 the other for himself. The 800 feet is the celebrated mine and the 400 of poor Eberhardt is good for nothing. Laddie did just what our white brothers generally do to the poor Indians: told him the mine wasn't good for anything and refused to give him the horse. He sold his interest to Marchant and another man for $2500

and they sold the mine last November to the Bank of California for $200,000. It is a consolation to know that Laddie drunk and gambled his all away in about three months and is now flat broke.

At least $3,000,000 has been invested in these mines by capitalists from San Francisco. John Benson has purchased one third interest in 800 feet, called the Eldorado.[1] I have examined it and sent him some of the rock to be assayed. The mine is in a good location, near the top of the hill but does not look very rich on top.

There are about ten thousand people around this hill and six lines of stages bring more every day.

The climate reminds me very much of Maine. It has snowed nearly every day since I came and freezes hard every night and the wind blows some about like Cape Horn. All the wood and water for both towns has to be hauled or packed by mules or Indians. Wood is thirty dollars a cord and water ten cts a gallon. Lumber is a great article as these mountains are mostly barren; some scrub trees on top. I saw a load yesterday brought from Carson Valley, sold for $450 a M feet. The freight on it was $260 a M feet. What kind of a team do you suppose hauled it. You haven't much idea of the teams out here. They use three wagons, one fastened behind the other and fourteen mules or horses and haul 30,000 lbs. The driver rides one of the wheel animals and drives with a single rein.

I have not found a place to pitch our tent yet. The weather has been so bad and I have been so busy looking at mines. I eat at restaurants for one dollar a meal and

[1] The name Eldorado is a common one in early California history. The first gold discovery in California, in a mill-race, by James W. Marshall (1848), was at Coloma, in Eldorado County. The first water-ditch for hydraulic gold-mining in California, a few miles south of Coloma, was called Eldorado, and there were paying mines at Eldorado Town and at Eldorado City.

sleep at a lodging house for 50 cts a night. That means we have the privilege of spreading our blankets on the ground which is covered with sawdust to make it soft. The house is about 24 × 50 feet and every foot of space is occupied, packed in heads and points. It amuses me to lay and listen to the conversation of the hundred men lying round. I believe there are men sleeping in that house from every State in the Union and they are a very good set of men, too. Don't you believe half you read about crime, etc., out here. I haven't seen a fight yet. There hasn't been a shot fired since I have been here. On the contrary this great crowd is composed of enterprising, go-ahead, smart business men. Of course there are plenty of gamblers and harlots but they behave themselves.

Well, this will do. 'Here I pause for the present.' Love to all the folks. Will tell you next time what I am trying to do for myself.

HAMILTON, *September 19th*, 1869

MY DEAR SISTER:

I received yours of August 12th, lately, on my return from a trip south. John Benson has been here and I showed him all the mines and country here. I have one fourth of one good mine here that we four of us discovered and located in May. We looked for some speculation for me to make that fortune but saw nothing very promising here. There are too many people after the same fortune. Everything is filled and although thousands have left there are still thousands left hunting for it.

A Mr. Sproul, an old California acquaintance, had just returned from Tempiute District, 150 miles south and brought back some 75 lbs of rock of almost fabulous richness. He had also found a quartz mill for sale near these mines which had been built by a New York Com-

pany. They had expended $150,000 in opening mines and on this mill and bust and the creditors had attached and bid the property in and were nearly all poor mechanics and would sell cheap. We had the rock assayed. Heard Sproul's account of the country and John thought I had better go down and examine things and if satisfactory to me he would invest in it. So we bought horses, took a pair of blankets each and started. John left for San Francisco.

We rode the first day 50 miles to Blue Eagle Springs. The road is through a plain between two ranges of mountains. The land falls off all the way to the Colorado but looks level and the road is excellent. The plain is about 25 miles wide and covered with sage brush and bunch grass. At the Springs is an oasis in the desert. Here are several springs 25 or 30 feet in diameter and deep and about 640 acres of good land.

The next day we rode 65 miles to Quinn Canon. Here we leave the valley and go through a range of mountains to another valley. There are houses at all these springs where you can get bacon and bread and tea without sugar and lightning whiskey. Here lives Captain Plum who owns mines at Tempiute Mountain and he went with us the next day, 40 miles, across the desert to the mountain.

There is a spring 12 miles from the mountain and no water at the mines. The miners have the Indians to pack their water. We intended to have gone to the mines and come back to the spring at night but our horses strayed off that night and we did not find them until most noon, so Plum had to go home and Sproul and I started for another spring to spend the night, about 15 miles off. We took the wrong course and finally got there about four o'clock. Our horses had been 24 hours without water and we had finished our canteen before we started.

I was some dry but didn't drink quite so much as the horse. I can ride all day without suffering any uneasiness without water, generally.

The next day in company with several miners whom we found at the Spring we rode up on the mountain and looked at mines all day. I examined ten locations and they exceed anything I ever saw at Treasure Hill, except the Eberhardt. I will state here that John took samples from five of them to San Francisco and had them assayed by a successful assayer and they averaged 1100 dollars a ton, in silver. The 'Babbee' gives $2100 a ton from 25 lbs of rock that we had crushed at a mill. The assay was $711 to the ton. The 'Silver Peak' is a bluff of rock, all mineral for 25 feet high. There is a vein of pure galena here that you can cut out with an axe. It seems as though nature hid her richest treasure in the most inaccessible place. Here in the midst of a desert, the nearest water 8 miles off, are the richest silver mines ever yet discovered. But we can master all these difficulties and take this ore to the mill and extract the silver. That's what's the matter now. Looking across the valley east, you can see the gap or canon in the mountains where stands the 'Crescent Mill,' 15 miles from the mines. There is no wood or water nearer and these you must have for a steam mill. We rode over that evening, got a pretty good supper and the next day examined the mill.

It is a 10 stamp mill with 5 furnaces for roasting the ore, two steam engines and is nearly complete. It will cost about 4000 dollars and take two weeks to put it in running order. Three miles from the mill is the 'Lisby' mine that the mill was built to work. Here are two shafts sunk 160 feet deep and 238 tons of ore taken out. The Tempiute mines were not discovered when the mill was built. This ore will work about $100 to the ton. There is a good dwelling house, assay office, shops, stable, a

fine spring, lots of water and wood convenient and a lovely climate. Just about the same as California. It is 50 miles south and at least 3000 feet lower than this place.

I was satisfied and we rode still farther east, 12 miles, to Pahranagat Valley. Here is a little town 'Hiko,' the County Seat of Lincoln Co., Nevada. Here were the parties who owned the mill. We had gotten so far east that they used greenbacks instead of coin. I inquired the day of the week (I had lost all run of time), found a bath house built over a warm spring and went in swimming. Went and took dinner with a Mormon family. The inhabitants are a sort of cross of Mormons and Gentiles. We stayed five days. Bought the property for $18,000. The mill cost $60,000. This valley is good land and we feasted on potatoes, tomatoes, green corn, water melons and vegetables generally. Then we rode back in three days.

I telegraphed to J. B. and he answered the 'money will be sent,' that is, enough to start with, as we only pay 1000 down and the balance in three months. Before that time we expect to work the 238 tons of ore at the Lisby mine as that mine goes with the mill and it ought to yield $15,000. Then we shall go to work on the Tempiute rock.

We have engaged two teams, bought our provisions, material for finishing the mill. One ton of quicksilver, 300 cds of wood (cut at the mill) engaged three mill wrights, one engineer, a man to take charge of the furnaces, a man to amalgamate, and start tomorrow. It will take 6 days to go down and about 10 days to fix the mill. This mill will work 10 tons of ore a day (24 hours). It costs about 30 dollars a ton to reduce the rock. It will require 24 men to run the mill, besides cutting and hauling wood. It takes one cord to a ton and 120 lbs of salt where the ore is roasted.

The object of roasting is on account of the base metal such as galena copper, antimony and sulphur which is found in most silver ores. The ore here at Treasure Hill is nearly all free from this and is called Chloride. The salt mixed with the pulp (crushed ore) and heated in the furnaces makes a chloride and it then freely amalgamates with the quicksilver. Don't you see?

I am stuck after silver mining. It is a most interesting study this working silver ores. Now if we work 10 tons a day and our expenses are $300 and the rock pays 100 to the ton we have a profit of $700 a day, but if we get some of that Tempiute ore that will work 700 and I don't dare figure the profits.

I found letters from Jennie Buck and the children are all well. As soon as we get well under way I shall send for her and we will get a light wagon and a span of horses and as Em Lu says 'go emigrating.' She can come here in four days from Red Bluff.

SAN FRANCISCO, *November 7th*, 1869

I was obliged to come here to get our supplies and some castings, tools, iron, etc. Also I had more to tell John than I could write. So I left the mill on Friday morning horseback; rode to Hamilton, 150 miles; arrived Monday morning; Left Hamilton, Wednesday, 10 o'clock, by stage 127 miles to Elko. Took the cars Thursday half past 7; and came through to San Francisco in the same car. Arrived Friday evening, half past six: 868 miles. The cars now run from Sacramento to Oakland opposite San Francisco, 6 miles across the bay.

I telegraphed to Jennie Buck from Elko to sell out and come to Sacramento as quick as possible and I would meet her there.

Mining at Hamilton was going on briskly. There are 175 stamps in 14 mills going and the shipments of silver

average $54,000 a week. I had a very pleasant ride. There was no snow on the summit and after my long ramble in the sage brush deserts of Nevada it looked so natural and homelike to see and smell the pine trees on the Sierras and then the valley with green grass and trees and flowers still green and the weather perfect. Such a climate in November, only California can produce.

The passengers from the East on our train were perfectly charmed with the scenery and climate. We had two of the Silver Palace cars along. They are elegant beyond description. Now you had better stop writing about our coming home and turn your heads this way. Why shouldn't you come this way, if you are so anxious to see us. We have more attractions to offer than you have. You are better able to spend the money and the time. Why, I think no more of going from here to Hamilton than you do of going to Boston. You can come out in five days and I know you would enjoy the trip. We have had excursion parties from all the Western Cities. Now, get up one from Bucksport.

Today is Sunday. I recollected reading in one of 'Ridinghood's' letters about the fine singing of the Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral so I strolled that way and looked in. This is the Bon Ton Catholic Church of San Francisco and the singing was fine, all the same as an opera to me, but I liked it. The Signora Bianchi is the prima donna and the tenor was fine. The altar was filled with priests and little boys to hold up their (the priests) skirts and everything was in the latest High Church style. What stuff and nonsense the Catholic worship is. Go right from St. Mary's to the Chinese Temple where they worship 'Josh' and you can't tell the difference. St. Mary has the best music but the priests of Josh beat Rome on skirts and magnificent dresses and idols.

After that Abbott and I put in an hour or so standing in the entrance of the Russ House looking and criticizing the pretty women walking by. You must excuse me, but I haven't seen any women for a long time you know. Then I happened somehow to think of you, probably some lady reminded me of you and I have been writing ever since.

MEADOW VALLEY, NEVADA, *February* 20, 1870

The town at the mines where we have located is the pleasantest place I have seen. We look from the side of the range of low hills where the mines are, over a valley 25 miles wide and 60 miles long, bounded by lofty ranges of mountains. The grass and timber are plenty. The mines, the most extensive and richest I have ever seen, but the water! We have to go *seven* miles to a spring and if we buy it it costs 10 cts a gallon. Fortunately there is some snow on the hill sides and the children help us out. I have struck one mining town at the start.

Of course somebody had laid out a town and taken up the land but Mr. Bush the proprieter gave me a lot and Jennie one and we selected our spot and have a house nearly finished. Last week came a rush of people and such a staking off of lots you never saw. You could not buy one now for 100 dollars. Some 1000 houses have been built and started and from present appearances we shall soon have a population of three or four hundred people. A stage line has been started too, to Hamilton and we shall have a mail weekly. Direct your letters hereafter to Hamilton, White Pine Co., Nevada.

I found sale for most of my goods at good prices. Sold over 1200 dollars to Raymond and Ely at the mill. I have been so busy at work on my house that I have not had time to look at the mines much but I can get interests in them, also in a mill site and water privilege, which I am assured can be brought within five miles of town. I shall

stay here and try and get even in the Crescent Mill. Jennie stayed some time with Sister Lee among the Mormons and will give you her impressions. She liked very much but objects to my having Mrs. Lee's pretty daughter, sealed to me, as Mrs. Buck no. 2.

We haven't gotten a name for our town yet although we have a Justice of the Peace and two lawyers. Also, we don't know sure whether we are in the state of Nevada or Utah. Don't intend to pay any taxes to either. We are 140 miles S. E. from Hamilton, 65 east from Logan. We had to camp one night much to the delight of Arthur and Em Lu I loaded three wagons and Marsten and his wife came with us. So we had a party of thirteen and it was warm and pleasant. We had our beds and built a roaring fire. The road was splendid but my horses are thin and we were a day and a half coming but we found a nice house and nice supper waiting us and got along first rate.

PIOCHE, NEVADA, *May* 12, 1870

Our new town is growing. We have good prospects for quite a place. The mill is going up. Will be in operation about the 1st July. Town lots are selling from one to five hundred dollars and the mines open rich. I have furnished up my house so that we are living very comfortably. Our set of furniture and Jennie's things from Red Bluff are on the road and when we get them we shall be very stylish for this place.

John Benson sent us a trunk filled with what he calls cast off clothing for Arthur. There were several complete suits hardly soiled; a dozen good shirts, silk undershirts, socks, kid gloves, etc. I wept almost that I was so large or that he hadn't grown larger when I overhauled that trunk. There was nothing I could get into except the shirts and they are a tight fit.

We had an act of Providence happen today. A notorious horsethief was breaking a piece of rock, stooping over, his pistol dropped from his sheath and shot him dead. This will be the second funeral. The first came off two weeks ago and we raised forty dollars (of course he had no money) and buried him decently and my prayer book was used as it used to be in Weaverville in early days, it being the only one in camp.

The first wedding and the first birth are yet to come off.

PIOCHE, *July* 14, 1870

Our town is filling up with strangers from all ports. Several mines have been sold. Parties are going to bring in the water from the springs. The Meadow Valley Mining Company's new mill is ready to start. Raymond and Ely are building a new mill. New buildings are going up every day. I am in the lumber trade principally. Have the agency for the saw mills and a lumber yard with a full assortment. I have sold over $1,000 within the last two weeks, I get 10 per cent commission.

I have bought five more shares in the Pioche lately. I have some money in the hands of Mr. Field, who is doing a banking business and divides profits and the rest of my time is put in trying to collect some four or five hundred dollars that I have trusted out of the goods I brought here. So, if anybody asks you what business I am in, you can take your choice of lumber dealer, banker, speculator in mines, dealer in chickens and eggs, besides driving people round the country with my team of fine horses and light spring wagon. As I have the only one in the place it is in great request.

We are doing well. Think our property is growing more valuable and very well satisfied with our location. The climate is lovely, not hot nor cold and we have had several showers, mild ones. Caught a few pails of water.

Now if we could only have a good old fashioned one, such as I have no doubt you are enjoying, I am all fixed to save two or three hundred gallons of water.

Pioche, *August 21st*, 1870

Business is good and will probably hold on for a month or two yet. It seems to me that the place is large enough for the business done now, but as long as they will pay for the lumber let 'em build. I shall sell my house and all my lots the first chance, as I think property is about as high as it will get. In the meantime people are crowding in. Every stage comes full, besides lots of families in wagons. The Mormons from Southern Utah send us lots of fruit — apples, peaches and grapes, also good vegetables and green corn and new potatoes.

Pioche, *November* 3, 1870

You are right in thinking that we live here just as we please. If we want a hot whisky toddy we have it. If we chose to lay abed late, we do so. We come and go and nobody wonders and no Mrs. Grundy talks about it. We are free from all fashions and conventionalities of Society, so called with you. I like this. About one half of the community are thieves, scoundrels and murderers and then we have some of the best folks in the world and I don't know but what our lives and property are as safe as with you. You can go up town and get drunk and get shot very easily if you chose or you can live peaceably. I don't have any trouble. I will send you the paper with an account of the last fight and the verdict. It served them right. When I heard the firing we ran out and saw the running but were some distance off. I was in hopes eight or ten would have been killed at least, as these fighting men are a pest in the community. Mr. Lee was close by and enjoyed the fight very much. He told

me they fought like tigers. It was a splendid charge. He buried the dead in his ministerial capacity with all due solemnity.

PIOCHE, *April* 16, 1871

I suppose in other countries this is Spring, but we don't see much difference here. One month is about like another. The grass is getting green but the trees, such as we have, are all evergreens.

I have got a cow so we have milk but it costs 30 cts. a day to water her.

There is nothing new to write. Two men had a difficulty in Fields Bank last week and settled it with pistols when they came out on the sidewalk. One was killed at the first shot — but that is a common occurrence as most all little difficulties are settled that way here between a certain class.

Bret Harte seems to have gotten his reputation in the East. He made the Overland what it is, but never created a furore in Cal. He throws a kind of charm around California life and mining camps, bars, etc. Very pleasant to read about but which I never experienced while living in them. It takes time and distance to soften these things down. The story of the Spanish girl 'Josepha' whom I saw hanged by a mob at Downieville in /52 could be worked up into a very good novel now.

PIOCHE, *May 13th*, 1871

Jennie Buck is having a new set of teeth built. Grandma Buck, as we call her, is gay. Has taken a great passion for playing casino and other games of cards and we have company most every evening — Judge Pitzer and our lady friends. The Judge is a paying caller as he furnishes the wines, etc. We are two bottles ahead now. She also has a large flock of chickens and

our cow is a treasure. We have to sell two quarts of milk a day to keep her in water. She is a most extravagant creature. She drank 13 gallons of water yesterday, at 4 cts. a gallon; but milk is worth a dollar so she pays her way.

I spent last week travelling, visiting the Mormons. I stopped two days with Sister Holbrook and learned more about these peculiar people than I ever knew before. I am prepared now to write a book on the Mormons. She gave me a book, The Commandments and Revelations, and explained everything and answered all my questions. I am afraid my convictions are not the same as most writers for I declare, on coming back to Pioche, among our people I say it with shame, I should say the Mormons are the Christians and we are the Heathens.

In Pioche we have two courts, any number of sheriffs and police officers and a jail to force people to do what is right. There is a fight every day and a man killed about every week. About half the town is whisky shops and houses of ill fame. In these Mormon towns there are no courts, no prisons, no saloons, no bad women; but there is a large brick Church and they keep the Sabbath — a fine schoolhouse and all the children go to school. All difficulties between each other are settled by the Elders and the Bishop. Instead of every man trying to hang his neighbor, they all pull together. There is only one store on the co-operative plan and all own shares and it is really wonderful to see what fine towns and the wealth they have in this barren country. It shows what industry and economy will do when all work together. They manufacture nearly all their cloth but import a great many goods from Salt Lake City. The girls don't wear chignons, or those little hats, and no furbelows, but dress plain and neat.

On our way we stopped about two hours at Kenosh.

In the evening there was a ball at the Church and we went in. I should think there were 100 girls. Oh, but they increase and multiply, these Mormons, I tell you. We used to think Oregon beat the world for babies but it's no where.

Well, the music was two harps and three violins; very good. The men were in their shirt sleeves and the girls in Lindsy Woolsy. One wore a lace cape, put on a little style, but most of them made no pretensions to dress up, as we should say. I was very politely offered a ticket to dance but not knowing whether I should draw an old woman or a pretty girl, declined.

At Cove Creek, 26 miles north of Beaver, is a stone fort: 100 feet square, walls 4 feet thick and 18 feet high, built in good shape. I puzzled my head over it considerably: what object Brigham had, for it belongs to him, in building this, I don't know. It makes a fine Stage Station. The telegraph line from Salt Lake to St. George runs through it and there is an operator there. We got a splendid meal and were waited on by three very pretty girls. A Mr. Hinckly lives there and takes comfort with three wives.

The Devil is not as black as he is painted. Take out polygamy from the Mormon system and I see nothing to object to and that will surely die out in the rising generation. Mr. Thompson's girls are not going to be sealed to a man with another wife. Not much, so they told me.

PIOCHE, *July 2d*, 1871

I have just returned from Utah with a band of cattle. Have been home a week. I bought them at Mountain Meadows, a little settlement 75 miles East. I bought 158 head, all young cattle; 47 are cows having 23 calves, 29 are two year old heifers, 22 are yearling heifers, the

rest young steers. They cost about $23.50 a head. They are a very nice lot to start with and raise cattle. I have left them 25 miles north of this place, on as good a range as I ever saw. I don't think I could find such a place for grass in California unless I should buy at a high price some ranch. Here the country is all unoccupied and rolling hills covered with bunch grass as far as the eye can reach. They are on a stream, or brook you would call it, that runs from the spring at the base of the mountain for two miles. This wild bunch grass is very nutritious and has a seed to it that makes it good fodder all winter and it makes fat and beef. There is but one drawback, that is: the danger of having them stolen. The country abounds in cattle and horse thieves. Nothing is safe unless you watch it with a Henry Rifle. I have a good man looking after them.

Pioche, *July 31st*, 1871

I have just received your letter of July 21st and as I am going out to the cattle ranch tomorrow I will answer it now. I do this in regard to Charley for whose health you seem anxious. If he is consumptive, as I should judge he is by your letters, let him come out here at once. This high and dry atmosphere and continual pleasant weather must be the best climate in the world for consumptives and the disease is actually unknown here. In fact there is no disease here except lead colic brought on by working in the mines, and such diseases as come from dissipation and drinking bad whisky. We have now been here nearly two years and none of our family have been sick a day. In this town with a population of over 1000 and probably over 100 children there have been but four deaths from natural causes and not one child has died.

Now, if you would save your boy's life let him take a tour in this country of at least two months and ride on

horseback, cook his grub and sleep out doors. He will not get cold, but two to one he gets well.

You ought to see me and my health. I am just as young as I was at 20 and Thursday I shall be 45 years old. I have been riding on horseback, sleeping with a saddle blanket on the ground and living on bacon and bread most of the time for the last two years. I am never sick.

We have the finest stock range that I ever saw, even in California. The cows keep having calves and we bought five more so we have now 182. The country lies at the base of a range of mountains that are covered with grass to their summits and is all rolling hills with nice valleys and streams of water between. A wild currant almost equal to the kind in your garden grows on the meadows and I shot sage hens as large as turkeys. Besides this, a stray sheep came along and we got him in the corral. So we lived on the fat of the land. This country we have, without money, free to all. Our nearest neighbor is four miles and every band of cattle want at least four miles square.

The Ward Beecher is still going down. Is now 120 feet. Not struck yet rich, but we have ore all the way. We are going to incorporate the mine and sell the stock, if we can, in San Francisco. The Panacka Mine here has been worked for some years, never paid. Lately Mr. Lightner, the Supt., sunk a new shaft and at the depth of 100 feet struck a fine ledge of ore worth 500 dollars a ton. During the past month 70,000 dollars has been taken from that shaft. O, the luck some people have! I don't own any of that mine.

PIOCHE, *November 2d*, 1871

To go back to my voyage home. Left New York by way of the Penn. Central Saturday night and had a de-

lightful ride the next day over the Alleghanies and through Ohio. The check man boarded the train as usual and checked our baggage, mine for the Fremont House, but when we arrived at the edge of the city of Chicago we stopped and commenced hearing reports of the fire. We ran up to within a mile of the fire and stopped. There was no depot, no bus, no Fremont, no hotel. I walked up to the burnt district but did not get within a mile of the fire. I managed to find some breakfast and slept that night at a private boarding house with another sufferer, on a spring mattress and one quilt.

That evening I went down on a bridge and the fire was magnificent. Thousands of tons of coal were burning and the fire was still burning a mile wide to the northern part of the city. Of course I lost all interest in Chicago and tried to get away as soon as possible but could not until 10 o'clock the next night. It afforded me some consolation to see them buying water at 10 cts. a bucket. I could not find any to drink so drank lager and the Chicago lager is first-rate. There appeared to be no scarcity of lager.

I found Pioche filled with strangers and almost built up again. The extraordinary richness of the Raymond and Ely mine had sent the stock up to 140 dollars a share. It was only 28 when I left. The black piece of ore that I took home is from this mine. They took out 55000 dollars in one week since I returned. Mr. Raymond is the owner of 8000 shares and is a millionaire.

The 'Black Prince' that Jennie owns 700 feet in, is close by this mine and they have gone to work on it and expect to find the same ledge. If so it will be valuable. We have incorporated the 'Ward Beecher' and Judge Fuller has gone to San Francisco to launch that on the market. We gave the broker one third and take stock. I have 4444 shares for my one third that I own. If we strike

anything rich I will send you some shares. At present it has no market value.

PIOCHE, *February 24th*, 1872

I hear from the cows and calves often and they are fat and we have not lost a calf that I know of. My lumber business has been good. Keeps me all time busy. I have sold since November 10th, over 125,000 feet and lots of shingles. The town still keeps growing. The stages come in loaded with people and nobody goes away. We must have a population now of over 2000. We have fifteen mining companies at work and five mills and all the mines are doing well. Even the 'Ward Beecher' has struck it at last. We have very good ore now at the depth of 170 feet. As I hold 6000 shares in this, you may consider me rich. The mining stock market in San Francisco has been wild the past month. Fortunes have been made and lost in a day and everybody is dabbling in stocks.

Our old friend, J. P. Jones, is Superintendent of the Crown Point Mine at Gold Hill. He has made a million and a half within a year. Some of the laborers in the mines and mills here have made from 5 to 1500 dollars on Raymond & Ely Stock. This stock when I was at home was worth 24 dollars. Now it is selling for 140 and pays a dividend of 5 dollars a month.

Mr. Badger, our Minister, has commenced to build a Church. He has raised over 2000 dollars. We have a Mason & Hamlin organ and several organists but few singers. Not much difference here between Sunday and the other days but the stores are closed and business generally stops Sunday afternoons.

PIOCHE, *May* 19, 1872

As to mines, we are getting rich slowly. Just now

stocks are depressed. Not from any fault of our mines. They are as good as ever, but from the break in the Virginia stocks where Jones and Sharon are fighting each other. The old story of the Bulls and Bears. We sold some Ward Beecher stock for 4 dollars a share but did not get it fairly agoing and now we shall wait for a reaction.

My lumber business is brisk. Sell all I can get for 110 dollars a thousand.

I had some books sent up to me by Personnette when he was in San Francisco, amongst them 'Two Years Before the Mast.' I read this when a boy and have not seen it since. It gave me my first ideas of California and is a correct account of the Coast, as many of the places are familiar to me and some of the parties I know. I just laid it down and have read it with a great deal of interest. It seems he resided in California in /59 and adds an account of his trip and what became of the people he knew and the ships. The Alert was burned by the Alabama. She lasted better than our old brig, the 'George Emery.' She laid her bones on the coast of Oregon about 2 years ago and I often meet with some of my old /49 acquaintances and trace up the passengers and others whom I knew. Most of them are dead.

PIOCHE, *June* 28, 1872

Business is rushing. I have no spare time. Yesterday received 11 loads, 15000 feet of lumber. Last week my sales amounted to 1300 dollars. We are to have a new mill in town. Water pipes are being laid through all the streets. The Raymond & Ely mine still pays 10,000 dollars a day. The Meadow Valley 60,000 profit a month. Jennie and I hold 100 shares and it pays us $100 a month and the town is crowded with people.

PIOCHE, *July 21st*, 1872

We have had an interesting day. Have been to Church twice and intend going again. Last evening we, the building committee, met and received the building from the contractor. Settled all the bills and had thirteen dollars left. Our church cost 3764 dollars. Today Bishop Whittaker consecrated it, assisted by Mr. Kelly of Hamilton and Mr. Badger. It is a very neat, pretty building in the Gothic order, and will seat 250 persons. The pews are made of California redwood and the reading desk, altar, etc., of the same. This wood is almost as pretty as mahogany.

The ceremonies of consecration of the Episcopal Church are similar to the Orthodox except that we donate the Church to the Bishop for the sole use of the Episcopal Church in a lengthy document which was read, and then in another he receives it for the purposes therein mentioned and the service for the day is very appropriate.

The singing was very good and Bishop W. preached an excellent sermon. He is really a fine preacher and a very popular man in Nevada.

PIOCHE, *December 28*, 1872

The latest excitement was the diamond field. This has been exploded. I have read the whole expose and don't know where the blame lies. Lint accuses Arnold and Arnold Lint and Roberts, etc. The whole thing was put up by some or all of these men and it is certainly a little the smartest trick I ever heard of. It caught all those old smarties like Ralston, Gushwilder, even Tiffany of New York was fooled, and 750,000 dollars worth of stock was sold. Arnold cleared 200,000 and went to Kentucky. Janin, the expert, made 40,000. It has done great damage to the stock market, as mines that really have merit are down to zero. When these high-toned

men go in to swindle the community, everybody gets leary of stocks.[1]

PIOCHE, *February 6th*, 1873

Business on account of the storm and horse disease[2] is very dull just now, as when our teams stop coming in and out it is like freezing up your river. The stages are very irregular. They have the Bank of Wells Fargo & Co. piled up with silver bars, but no quartz can be hauled to mill now and the railroad is not quite finished to the mills. The horses are not very sick. Probably the disease is mild, compared to what it was in the Atlantic States. None have died and most all are fast recovering.

I will send you another Overland and call your attention to 'Ships, Spurs & Angles,' as a fair sample of hundreds of men that I have met in this country. In fact I can write a story and a true one of the 'lost Breyfogle mine,' that will beat it. This man Breyfogle has been luring parties out in the vicinity of Death Valley and hunting for a mine for ten years past and he gets a party every year.

PIOCHE, *June 28th*, 1873

My lumber business has fallen off as the growth of the town is slow and steady. The mines are using most of

[1] *The Diamond Field Hoax.* A 'salting' scheme (1872) which took in Henry Janin, famous conservative mine expert and consulting engineer, Tiffany's, Baron Rothschild, and nearly every financial leader on the Pacific Coast, and which resulted in a gain for the perpetrators, and a consequent loss to promoters, of more than a half-million dollars. The discovery of a cut diamond in the field was responsible for the bursting of the bubble in time to save eager investors untold millions. Of great interest is the fact that none of the experts and financiers were made suspicious by the coincidental appearance of diamonds, rubies, and sapphires.

[2] The horse disease was the 'epizoötic,' and was an epidemic in all parts of the country, about 1873. Horse-drawn street-cars had difficulty in operating. Many references to it may be found in *Harper's*, *Leslie's*, and other periodicals of the day.

the lumber. I shall pay more attention to cattle. Tell Father I have secured the land as far as I can, as it probably never will be surveyed by the U.S. Govt. I have taken up under the State Act 4, four quarter sections, embracing all the springs and water; built houses on each and had them surveyed and recorded. This gives us control of a range ten miles long north and south by three wide, at the base of a range of mountains. This farm of 30 square miles will easily keep 2000 cattle. We have over 500 now and you have to ride some time and hunt to find them. We have them distributed at the springs and put salt at the watering places. I rode all over it last week and they look fat and sleek. The grass is now a foot high. We marked up to the time I was out before 100 calves and I saw enough of new calves to make an average of one calf a day for the time I had been gone. We ought to have an increase of 200 this year. I have just bought 42 head more from California. Just arrived. Got them for 900 dollars. So much for the cattle business.

PIOCHE, *August* 31, 1873

I just received a letter from John Benson. Have settled with him in full. He never would have asked a cent from me but he lost awfully in mining stocks last year. He was afraid to tell me how much. His farm in Napa Valley cost 10,000 and he has spent in improvements 21,000 more. I don't know what his improvements consist of. He has not built any fine house. John says it is a costly plaything and doesn't produce any income. He would like very much for me to go there and take charge of it and perhaps I may sometime.

We have had a great quantity of rain this summer. I think the climate is changing as the country settles up. We had one thunder shower that flooded most all the

houses. Pioche is built in a ravine or gulch. The main street and two rows of buildings cover all the level land and then the houses are built in tiers. Five tiers are above another on the side hill. During this shower the windows of Heaven were opened. The water ran down the mountain sides two or three inches deep. In less than 20 minutes the water ran down the street 3 feet deep, enough to carry off wagons and everything loose about town. Some houses were filled with mud a foot deep. There was no time to do anything. I lost a little lumber but our house was all right. We live on level ground just out of the gulch at the lower end of town. It has rained for the last two days steadily. If this sort of thing continues the desert may bloom and blossom like the rose, for if it rained here like it does with you, the country would be covered with vegetation. Forests would take the place of sage brush. The land is good enough. All it wants is water. It has been a great season for grass and the cattle are having a good thing.

PIOCHE, *January 15th*, 1874

We have had a concert and a ball since I wrote. The concert was a complete success and realized about 300 dollars for the school fund. I had no idea we had so much musical talent. We had a little Glee Club of five Cornish men who sing first rate; a pianist; three lady singers; a comic singer; a jig dancer and a negro performer. Everybody got more than their money's worth and all the ladies had a chance to air their fine clothes.

Then, New Year's night the Young Men's Social Club gave a ball and invited the guests and the ladies overhauled their trunks again and came out in full feather. We had a very pleasant time and a nice supper. It was the only ball that Jennie and I have attended since we left Weaver and we had almost forgotten the 'Lancers'

and how to behave. We never shall enjoy balls again as we did in those days when we first lived in Weaver and we never shall find such a pleasant circle of friends as we had there.

How we have scattered over the face of the earth since: Mrs. Greenhood in Europe, Jones in Virginia City, Capt. T. in Montana, Moses and Aunt Lucy still remain there but they write that it is rather melancholy at times. The fun is all gone. Somehow we don't make friendships like those old California friends. We are just as well fixed here as we ever were and like the place very much. It is still growing fast and filling up with people and is quite a large town.

I am closing out the lumber and collecting bills. Selling my grain and hay at a good profit. I have gone into real estate a little. In the spring I shall either go to mining or go over to Utah and buy cattle.

You ask what I read. I have read Mark Twain's book 'The Innocents Abroad' or his cruise to Europe in the Quaker City. It is funny and would amuse you. I will send you some stamps if you will send me 'Man & Wife.' I like those stories. I also have Harpers but I read very few books. Haven't time.

You wonder what so many lawyers do here. About half of them are what we call 'scrubs' and starve, but nearly every mine is in litigation and the Court sits nearly every day. If ever one finds a rich mine here there will be sure to be two or three claimants. You can't avoid a fight or a law suit and the same way about lots. If you don't build on it and stay there with a rifle, somebody will jump it. You have no idea of sharp practice till you live here.

PIOCHE, *May 25th*, 1874

Pioche is on the down hill grade at present. The mines

are down to water at last, 1200 feet appears to be the water level — rather a deep well to draw water. It will cost 60,000 dollars to put in pumps and take six months to get to work. They will use compressed air engines and also drill with the same power. So business is dull and people are migrating to other places and we don't expect to make any money for some time. I have lost 2000 dollars since the 1st of January. With all my caution mines and men have failed that I considered perfectly good.

Our dairy is just under way. I built the milk house myself after the most approved plan. We have a patent churn, a square box that revolves, capable of churning 40 lbs. at a time; and 200 milk pans, butter worker and mould. Got our salt from San Francisco: ground Liverpool salt. Johnson brought in the first butter last week and sold it like hot cakes, as fast as he could, at 50 cts. a pound. It is as yellow as gold. We expect to make 40 lbs. a day when we get in all the cows.

PIOCHE, *July* 25, 1874

I received a letter from you last week. I should have written before but Arthur gets well so slowly that I could not write you any progress and even now we do not know what will be the condition of his leg. It will be three inches shorter than the other at least. Whether the bones have united so it will be strong or not, we don't know yet. He has been two months now and the sore has almost all healed up and the pain and soreness gone so that he begins to enjoy life, has a good appetite and plays checkers and reads and amuses himself. We have concluded to let him get well and strong and then take him to San Francisco to some eminent surgeon and see what can be done. These doctors are not equal to the case. In the meantime nature and his good constitution will heal him up in some way.

Our dairy is a success so far. We sell 100 lbs of butter per week for 50 cts. We make a good article and I have no trouble in disposing of all we can make. Beef cattle are very cheap: 5 cts. for the best beef. While the demand for beef has fallen off, the supply has increased. The country has been overstocked from Texas. But not such cattle as we are raising. A good milch cow is worth from forty to eighty dollars. We are not selling any this season. Shall let ours grow.

The whole course of Arthur's life will be changed by his accident. He was a strong, active boy, a good rider. He and I would have taken all the care of the cattle this summer if he had not met with this. It will probably be a year before he gets over it. He has a good faculty for trade and some taste for mechanics but he will never be physically the strong active man he would have been. This makes me sad sometimes but he may do just as well in life after all.

PIOCHE, *August* 16, 1874

We had Bishop Whittaker to preach today. He visits us once a year and the Church is filled full once a year at least. He is a first-class preacher and one of the most courteous Christian gentlemen that ever I have met. He came immediately to see Arthur and has called twice. I discussed the Beecher case with the Bishop. He does not believe B. quite criminal but says ever since B. officiated at the Richardson and McFarlane marriage he thinks he had a low estimate of the marriage relations. Whether B. is guilty or not it all comes from running with that free love set: Woodhull, Antony, Stanton, and company. Beecher has a weak spot in his head on this subject. It must be 'nuts' for Storrs and Uncle Richard wrote me what they say about it. For my part I am truly sorry to see such a man barked at by every

little cur in the country newspapers. For I admire Beecher whether he is guilty or not. I take the N.Y. Times. The edition takes the right view of the matter, I think.[1]

PIOCHE, *October 11th*, 1874

We have a jocky club and a race course here and we have just had three days racing. As the purses offered were 1000, 1250 and 1500 dollars we had horses from all over the state and Salt Lake to contest for the money. Pools were sold on the races to the amount of $2600 and the club taking out 10%, it made lots of money. The race track is four miles from town in the level valley, just a pleasant ride and everybody went, babies and all. The last day I took Em Lou down on horseback. She can wear her mother's riding habit. Em is a fearless rider and really sits a horse very well. We rode down with a large party of gentlemen and ladies and dashed around the track in style. Em's cup of happiness was full. All my happiness now is seeing my children enjoy themselves. The refreshment stands and wagons and the crowd reminded me of going to 'Muster' in my youth, but there wasn't any gingerbread like we had then.

Mary Sewall is growing to look like our mother. I can see it sometimes so plainly. Rufus can walk. The Hoodlum, we call him, is going to be a terror to the neighborhood. I think he will be something like John Benson

[1] The Right Reverend Ozi William Whitaker, born in 1830, in New Salem, Massachusetts, came to Nevada as an Episcopal missionary in 1863. He was chiefly responsible for the establishment of the Episcopal Church in Nevada. In 1868 he was elected Missionary Bishop of the Diocese of Nevada and Arizona. He was made Bishop in New York in 1869.

The Beecher Case. Henry Ward Beecher was sued in January, 1875, by Theodore Tilton for the alienation of the affections of his wife, Elizabeth Tilton. Adultery was charged. The jury never agreed on a verdict.

The Free-Love Set. An appellation applied to such women as Victoria Woodhull, Isabella Hooker, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, *et al.*, who advocated birth-control, easier divorce, and votes for women.

when he was a boy. John has sent me a famous bull 'Frank Bent,' pure blooded Jersey and Durham.

PIOCHE, *November 24th*, 1874

Mining stocks are low on account of the tightness of the money market in San Francisco. I am all out. Sold out finally at a profit of 350 dollars as I can use all my money in my lumber business. Jennie has turned hers into cash and is waiting for new worlds to conquer.

I have built two houses lately on one corner lot I own and rent them for 85 dollars a month. Jennie Buck has built one she rents for 20. The town is growing faster than ever before and two daily stages from the railroad come in crowded. We had over 1600 votes at the last election — a small democratic majority but as two thirds of them are Irish and Cornish this is not to be wondered at. We elected five of our county officers on the Republican ticket by the liberal use of money. My old friend, J. P. Jones, put out about 100,000 dollars. This elected a Republican Legislature and ensured his election to the U.S. Senate next winter. Jones has become immensely wealthy in Crown Point Mine at Gold Hill. He will make his mark yet in the Senate, for he is equal to it.

Only think that we were one of three families, all that were in this place three years ago. Now there are 3,000 people here. I intend to keep things well in hand and be all ready for the bottom to drop out, although the town may last, like Virginia City, for years. We have fixed our house all up nice and convenient, and are living just as well as we could anywhere. We intend to invite several of our old California friends who are here to dinner Thanksgiving but we shall not go to the extravagance of turkey. That takes 10 dollars. We have plenty of chickens. I wish we could all be at Father's or at your house.

PIOCHE, *March 14th*, 1875

I received letters from Personnette, Cap Trufant and John Benson lately. They are all alive and scattered in different parts of the Pacific Slope. If you are fond of grapes you had better visit John's farm in Napa, California. He raised 600 tons last year and made 20,000 gallons of wine and quite a lot of raisins, but the enterprise doesn't pay. From Mrs. P.'s letter and a Bangor paper she sent, I should judge Bucksport to be a great place for drinking ardent spirits. I supposed the strict law you have against selling whisky would reform all that. How does it happen that you have to make such strong efforts to reclaim drunkards by L. T. A. Societies and Reform Clubs? Is intemperance gaining ground? If so, I suppose the Maine Liquor Law must be a failure. From my experience of 25 years now, in places where there has been no restraint in selling liquor and no temperance societies I have formed my opinion about intemperance and drunkards. I have never known a man to reform and stay reformed that had become an habitual drunkard. It seems to be a kind of disease with some which nothing will cure. Thousands of others seem to have no desire to get drunk, never acquire that appetite for it, yet drink temperately. Others again (very few), never drink at all. Saloons are licensed here as are all other kinds of business. I believe the last legislature here repealed the law licensing gambling and made it illegal to keep any banking game.

We don't need any Reform Club to close liquor saloons here on account of the decline in mining and scarcity of money. About 15 of our saloons have closed up and gone where the woodbine, etc. — and a fair game has not been able to live for a long time. Although this is all very nice in a moral point of view, yet we sigh for the good old times that are past: when the mining companies paid

out over $150,000 a month and you could buy and sell and make a profit. We have hardly revenue enough to keep our schools going. Our worthy Pastor, Mr. Cline, found his salary growing small and beautifully less. Instead of halves they put quarters in the plate and he thought he could do a great deal more good in Vallejo, California, and went and left us in darkness. The Sunday School flourishes without him.

PIOCHE, *March* 24, 1875

Pioche is still very quiet in business matters, although the mines are improving and the stock rising. The pump in the Raymond & Ely mine will start about the 1st of April and a big bonanza is confidently expected.

Arthur has commenced going to school. He still has to walk with crutches. His foot is still numb and swelled. It doesn't go back as soon as I thought, to a natural state.

Mamie is a good scholar. She will soon be able to write you a letter, and reads well. She has an excellent teacher. Em Lou is nearly as large as her mother. Rufus, generally called Harry for short, is out doors most of the time and can talk a little and is growing finely.

PIOCHE, *July* 29, 1875

You don't understand entertaining company. Tell Father I entertained eighteen at my dairy and that in a house with two rooms. To be sure most of us slept out doors but we had a jolly time. We returned last week. Staid two weeks. Arthur will come in Friday. I have a nice light wagon and plenty of horses so we sent out one load of five children and the grub, etc. Then I drove out Mrs. Buck and the boy, Mrs. Hamilton and her hopeful and Mrs. Watts. The next day Judge Pitzer and Miss Pirley came. Then the tooth extractor, Dr. Nichols.

Then Jim Pierson, my next door neighbor brought out Mrs. Halpin. The Judge was sick and Miss Pirley, who was brought up on a farm down near St. Johns, didn't like the smell of the cows; so they went back next day. The rest of us formed a pleasant party.

I killed the fatted calf and the Doct. and I shot plenty of sage hens (a bird resembling your partridge) and rabbits. We are milking 83 cows so you know we had plenty of cream. Jim P. brought us up a quarter of lamb and we lived high. The garden furnished lettuce, radishes and beets, etc. The ladies were all good cooks. Mrs. Hamilton, weighs 180 and is one of those fat good-natured kind, and Mrs. Halpin a San Francisco girl, were the screamers of the party.

We had a picnic one day. About 2 miles above the house on the mountain is a grove of large pine trees. Now a tree 2 feet through and 50 feet high is a rarity here, the forests being of a kind of dwarf cedar and nut pine about 15 feet high. You have to go high up on the mountain ranges and then you will find forests of pine like they are down East.

The mountains rise up above the ranch four or five thousand feet, green to the tops and the dairy ranch, with its beautiful spring coming out of granite rock, was voted a lovely place. You know we have to buy all our water in town and keep it in a barrel, for 3 cts. per gallon. At the ranch we had the best soft water, cold as ice, in any quantity. The children built dams and water wheels and caught pollywogs.

We have ten horses so I could mount most of the party and we took many a ride. Mrs. Halpin riding a man's saddle astride.

Pioche, *October 4th*, 1875

I have just returned from quite a trip into the land of

the Latter day Saints. You have heard of the man who was twelve miles from a lemon. Well, we were 150 miles from a trout. The nearest point where we could fish was Pangwitch Lake. We had heard wondrous accounts of this Lake and the trout in it, so the tooth extractor (Dr. Nichols) and myself planned to go. We took my light wagon and two horses, put in a full outfit for camping out two weeks and left on the 13th of September. By the map the Lake appeared to be due east from Pioche, on the east side of the Wasatch Range at the head of the East Fork of the Sevie River. After getting through the Range near Pioche we came to the immense desert that stretches almost from Salt Lake to the Colorado. From Desert Springs to Antelope Springs we drove across a level plain for 30 miles. The road is excellent. Thence to Iron Springs, 74; thence to Parawan, the first Mormon town, 22 miles. This is the place from which I got my lumber and I know most of the people. We were hospitably entertained by Brother Madison.

We found Parawan built around a square with the Church in the center. The streets are shaded with large trees. It is a place of 1200 people.

Here we left the plains and went right through the Wasatch Range by a natural pass. Ten miles to the summit and down through Bear Valley about 15 miles to the Sevier River. In this valley we found lots of prairie dogs like you see on the plains, also little ponds of water covered with ducks and flocks of quail and we commenced living on game.

The next day we passed through the town of Panguilet and got some supplies from the co-op. store, kept by Sister Proctor and then up to the Lake, 15 miles, which we reached after five and a half days' travel.

It was situated as I supposed in a basin on the top of the range, probably 8 or 9,000 feet above sea level. The

lake is about two miles by 1½ wide — a pretty sheet of water and abounds in trout. There are thousands of acres of meadow land around it and on the hills pine forests. A Danish man lives there and makes a good living by fishing. He has two boats and furnished us with milk, butter, bait and everything. We pitched our tent on the meadow near the lake and fished and hunted five days, lived on trout and fat ducks, grouse, etc. It is a beautiful place for this and if it was only about two days journey from Pioche, would be a great place of resort.

Coming home we passed through Cedar, a beautiful place, an oasis in the desert. It looks like an old New England village: broad level streets, shaded with fine trees, brick houses set in the midst of gardens filled with apples, peaches, plums and delicious grapes. It was a Paradise to us. Bishop Lunn and his wife, Mrs. Lunn No. 1, did everything to make our stay agreeable. His garden reminded me of mine in Weaverville. A large old fashioned brick house and the furniture reminded me of Grandmother's time. Wife No. 2 lives in a house in the rear. No. 3 lives one or two doors up the street. I think Mormonism is breaking up. The rising generation will drop polygamy and paying tithing is about done now. Brigham's power is waning fast. The girls have dropped linsey-woolsey and wear calico and overskirt and fashionable hats and you know that will break the richest of them. One family will be all a man can stand.

Well, we got home all right, the Doctor with sore lips and sunburnt but improved in health. Brought home 200 trout and gave to our friends and have been telling ever since our adventures.

Pioche, *November 28th*, 1875

I think you would be interested in the children. Arthur is very strong and gets around about as well as

ever. I have had a shoe made with an iron brace on the ball of the foot. His leg is 3 inches shorter. He can walk with a cane but still uses crutches. Em Lou is recovering slowly. Has an immense appetite but is troubled with neuralgia and some cough. She had what the doctor called typhoid fever but of a mild type. I think she will soon be all right.

Mary Sewall has more brain than any of them. She can outspell all the family, writes a pretty good hand, is very quick to learn and sings from morning till night. She is the little lady — very particular in her dress and all her ways. In this respect she does *not* take after her father. The baby, Rufus, is just beginning to talk. To me this is the most interesting age of a child and he is continually astonishing the family by his way of expressing himself. He is going to be a very orderly boy, picks everything up and puts it away— put my jackknife in the bunghole of a ten gallon keg the other day. I think he will have a great taste for horses. We are never lonesome with our children. I make companions of my children and enter into all their plays and sports and they think home is the best place in the world. The idea of parents making home so disagreeable that their children run away is something I can't understand.

We are like Micawbers here, waiting for something to turn up, which means finding a bonanza in our mines. In the meantime most of them pay expenses but there is no speculation in Pioche stocks or real estate at present. I am furnishing some beef to the butcher — very cheap: 4 cts per lb. Three years ago I got 9 cts. but the cattle get their own grub and are increasing slowly.

PIOCHE, *January 2d*, 1876

This is the last day of the holidays and the town will probably get sober today and Monday things will go on

as usual. We have so many Irish, Cornish and Germans among us that we keep the Christmas holidays for a week. The Catholic Church keep a religious holiday Christmas, have high mass at 12:00 o'clock and keep it up all night. The Episcopal Church have a service on Christmas day. The ladies spent three evenings decorating the Church with evergreens and fixing the tree.

We all went on Christmas Eve. Everything went off splendidly except Mr. Kline's address to the audience. The Church was crowded, the children sing very prettily. There are 130 children in the Sabbath School but our Minister is a failure. He has no faculty of talking. Is even a poor reader. He gave a kind of an account sales of what the presents cost. How much candy he bought. How much trouble he had to dress the tree and not a word about Christ or Christmas. Everybody was disgusted. I thought how Father would have come out on such an occasion. We thought Mr. Badger was commonplace enough but this man has mistaken his calling.

On New Year's Eve we received an invitation to a grand ball given by the 'Young Men's Social Club.' You see we are reckoned as old folks already. As Jennie did not care to go and as Miss Em Lou had a new dress I took her to the ball. If you have any recollection of your first party (you did not have any balls to go to) you can imagine how she enjoyed it.

There is a generation of young people growing up here that I hardly know. There were over 150 at the party and the Young Managers in kid gloves and rosettes, did everything in style. Everybody was polite and on their best behavior. Em can dance very well. Her partners were generally old married men whose wives are in San Francisco, as she is still a child and not in society. I do not approve of forcing young girls into women. Let them be children as long as possible, but there is no more

polite, genteel amusement than dancing and no place where a young girl will acquire ease and grace of deportment but at a ball, when it is composed of well bred people.

We have the most cosmopolitan society. I could see in the Hall ladies and gentlemen from nearly all the principal cities in the Union, besides English, French and German. The mingling of all these different styles has produced what will be recognized now and in the future as the Pacific Coast Style and Manners. California and Nevada are one and the same.

PIOCHE, *February 13th*, 1876

Miss Sadie Robinson has arrived and advertises for music scholars. Johnson, Ida's husband, lives close by us and I went over to hear her play. She plays very well, better than any lady here but she is very affected and a great blower. She is supposed to be a typical Yankee girl of the period. As most of the ladies here are from the west and a few from the south, for the honor of our State of Maine, I could wish she had been a better sample. All the ladies put on their best and called on her. There was a party gotten up at Judge Rive's for her benefit and sleigh rides, etc. It would appear from her conversation that she has been a reigning belle in society in Bangor, Boston and Washington but when she tells about leaving her elegant furs at home, as she supposed she was coming to a warm climate, and her intimate friend, Mrs. Nellie Sartoris, and how she misses the green house flowers she is accustomed to all the year round at home and all that sort of thing — it won't go down in the back settlements. These ladies here see right through all these shams and ridicule her, but she has made quite a sensation among the men. They like her style and if she can teach music she will have plenty of scholars.

The superintendent of the Raymond and Ely Mine, with 12,000 a year and house, servants and carriage thrown in, has a daughter who takes lessons and sends her home in the sleigh, I see. So she has one good customer. Then the Young Men's Social Club give a ball Wednesday evening, where she will be the center of attraction. Oh, but this must be a Paradise for a pretty girl, a trifle fast and who has lots of good clothes. Only six young ladies and 150 men!

PIOCHE, *March* 8, 1876

The 1st of March I went out to Spring Valley where the cattle are. The valley was covered with snow and ice three or four inches deep and the cattle doing pretty well eating sage brush: that is a species of sage brush called grease wood. We have lost nearly all the calves that have come up to this time. I found two less than a week old. I found a great many Texas cattle dead but none of mine. There is a thousand head of cattle mixed up with mine as the snow has driven them all out of the mountains. I bought a lot of hay and drove up all the poor cows to feed. The steers and young cattle will live. Throughout the State at least one third of the cattle will die. This will have the effect of making what lives the more valuable.

In California the winter is very hard. It rained for 67 days in San Francisco. The snow is 20 feet deep where the railroad crosses the Sierras. At White Pine the snow is 10 feet deep. The oldest inhabitant has been here eleven years and never saw a winter to compare with this. Business of all kinds has been dull and we are nearly broke buying wood at 12 dollars a cord.

I suppose you will not have the Womens Temperance Movement at your place as you have no saloons to pay out. I have read a good deal of it in the papers from the

West and I believe it will start in California. Here we have 35 whisky shops and very few praying women. The contest would be too unequal. I don't think they will have the heart to start in.

I have sent some greenbacks to New York for Harpers and ordered that book 'Joseph the Jew.' I send the Overland for March. It is California all over and I like anything that relates to California. That State is my home and is an empire of itself. It is the garden of the United States. Nevada is a kind of an offshoot of California, a park settlement. All our mining companies are incorporated in California; have their headquarters in San Francisco. Our people are constantly flitting back and forth. From Pioche to San Francisco is four days. When people make enough money here they go there to live and spend it and send their children there to school. In fact it was all a mistake making a state of Nevada and was only done so that Nye and Stuart could be U.S. Senators. We all belong body and soul to California and could just as well have our laws made at Sacramento as at Carson. The state government of Nevada is a farce.

The weather has been so bad we have only made a beginning at fixing up the Dairy Farm but I intend to have a model dairy and milk 75 or 100 cows next spring. I have a beautiful place called Parsnip Springs about 30 miles from town. This would look a long ways off down East but it doesn't look as far to me as from Bucksport to Ellsworth. One reason is we can see so far in this country. From my house in Pioche you can see right across the valley where the place is. You wouldn't guess it was more than ten miles. Then looking up the valley with a glass you can see Patterson, 50 miles. It is like taking away the island and levelling down the hills and looking from your house to Belfast, Castine and Owls-

head. Well, at Parsnip I have a spring ten feet in diameter boiling up cold as ice and a small stream running from it for a mile through a little valley about 10 rods wide. Near the spring I have built a good house and right over the spring I shall build the milk house with the corrals, calf pasture in the bottom below. Two miles back the mountains rise up two and three thousand feet high covered with grass almost to the summit, with some groves of large pines. The face of the country is rolling hills with groves of cedar and pines and is as pretty a place as I have seen in Nevada. I have two men to attend to this place. One has a wife and I furnish everything and they do the work and we divide the profits. Butter is always worth here 50 cts. a lb.

We are all well and the boy 'Rufus Harry' is just as near perfect as he can be. He is a splendid specimen of the human family.

PIOCHE, *May 8th*, 1876

Our mines hold out well. New machinery and an immense pump are being put up on the Meadow Valley as the Raymond and Ely pump cannot drain the water, although it has been pumping out 2500 gallons an hour for a year past. When they can once get the water under control and sink below the water level, no doubt a Bonanza equal to the Comstock will be found. As the same thing had to be done there and they have all proved richer below than they were on top. The dull times will keep most of our folks that had planned a visit to the Centennial, at home.

PIOCHE, *August* 6, 1876

We have had frequent showers lately and everything looks fresh and green but the town is very dull. About half of our population have left for other mining towns

but I don't know as they have bettered their condition for it appears to be dull and hard times everywhere.

Several of our people have been to the Centennial and returned but they are all men who can't describe what they see and I have not talked with any of them about it. I can appreciate your inability to describe it in a letter. One sees so many things. Now if you and I were there together we could take one thing at a time and enjoy it.

Mamie's arm got well without any trouble. She grows to look like our mother more and more. I am very proud of my children and they are a great comfort to us. All the happiness I have now is to see them enjoy themselves and have every reasonable wish gratified and how little it takes to make them happy if they have good dispositions and are properly trained in early life. I don't believe they would be any happier if I possessed a million and rode in Central Park, than they are now.

PIOCHE, *November 3d*, 1876

We have two mining excitements: one 90 miles north at Ward and one 90 south in Utah at Leeds, and most everybody is going. Pioche will lay quiet until such time as the Meadow Valley Co. decides to put up a quarter of a million and complete the machinery for pumping etc., now about half completed.

My winter campaign is all planned. I shall drive my cattle to the railroad. I should have been on the road by this time but we have had a storm or a succession of storms of rain, hail and snow for the last two weeks, so we shall have to hunt the cattle all over again. I had most of them together last week but the storm scattered them.

I shall be here to vote for Hayes and Wheeler, which consoles me a little.

I predict a mild winter and if so, I have plenty of time to drive 200 miles in about 30 days, which will bring me to the railroad in the vicinity of Elko. I shall take three men, a wagon and six horses and about 200 cattle.

The first chance we have I will get little Rufus' photo and then you will see the flower of the Buck family. He is a fine specimen of a boy. I could fill a page with his smart sayings and doings. Em Lou is almost a young lady. Is a good scolar and makes good progress in music and she does all kinds of house work too, and is a great help to her mother and Arthur is as good as a man with the cattle. They will go to school this winter. I hope in another year to send Em to California to some good school and get Arthur in some business house or have him learn a trade.

WELLS, NEVADA, *December 20th*, 1876

I arrived here with my cattle about a week ago and I am waiting for the market to improve a little before selling and as the cattle are all shipped on the cars to San Francisco, they stand the trip better to rest awhile.

This town is a shipping point for all these farms and mining towns in the vicinity and is a small place. Large trains are constantly passing over the C. P. road which does an immense business and is probably the best paying road in the country.

As Pioche is almost deserted we had to strike out and find business. I could not sell cattle there for any price for money, but here I get cash and all in a lump. I shall probably start for home in the course of a week and hope to find a letter from you.

PIOCHE, *January 17th*, 1877

I found a letter from you, December 31st. I wrote you from the small town on the railroad called Wells and also wrote Father. You should get Lieut. Wheeler's report

and map of Eastern Nevada and Arizona, which is the first and only time the country has been surveyed and mapped. I have now travelled almost all over Nevada and Western Utah. From the Sierras to the Washatch Mts. and from the railroad to the Colorado it's about all alike. Some valleys are better than others. Some are mere dry sage brush plains and some filled with springs and grass like a meadow. Clover Valley, where I stopped, is the best I have seen and strange to relate the climate is better and warmer at the railroad 260 miles north, than here. The whole face of the country is about 6000 feet above the sea level and the mountain ranges rise five or six thousand feet higher. For this reason we have a cool climate. Frost is liable to come any month and we have no season that you call Spring.

I like the country better up there than here for cattle as you have the advantage of the San Francisco market and better grass and a far better class of people live there. Most all engaged in stock raising. Hay and barley are also cheap and here we don't raise much. Hay is so plentiful it is only worth 5 dollars a ton and one can take a mowing machine and horse rake and cut all you want as the valley is only taken up on one side and there are thousands of acres unoccupied. I think some of gathering up all my cattle next Spring and taking them up there close to the railroad. I have a place selected if I wish to go.

PIOCHE, *February* 16, 1877

I received a long and interesting letter from Mary. She reminded me that you had passed your 80th birthday. In looking over the record of the Buck family that I copied from Mary's when I was at home in /71, I find you have lived to a greater age than any of them for they all appear to have lived about 75 years.

I tell the children a great deal about you. They all send their love and little Rufus says in his evening prayer 'God bless Grandpapa. I would like to see him.'

Pioche, *September 28th*, 1877

We returned to town last week, having spent over two months on the ranch. During this time we milked 13 cows and made over 200 lbs. of butter and used all we wanted besides. We broke in 5 new heifers to milk and broke two colts to ride. Our garden produced all the vegetables we wanted and we shall have enough for winter use. This is just the kind of life I like. If we were only in a little different kind of country — in some respects this is good. We have as good grazing as we could find anywhere but I have no land to cut any hay. Then, the market here is very limited and cattle are very cheap. My fine stock that I have taken such pains to raise, won't bring any higher price than common stock, because everybody is too poor to buy and I am surrounded by a set of poor white trash that live off of my cattle. Never kill any of their own and we have to live in town to have schools and society.

The children are all healthy. Arthur is large and strong and a good boy. Little Rufus has grown the most and is a fine boy. He was four years old last week. The children were reading the history of the U.S. and I told them that you could well remember the last war with England and told them what I could think of: your being captured by an English Man of War. They were very much interested and want you to tell them the whole story. Now won't you have it written out in full and send it to me? I should like to have it. They will like it very much. Mary will probably write it or Sarah Cole.

PIOCHE, *November* 25, 1877

I have been reading the December Harpers today. Mrs. Fremont gives her impressions of California in /49. She had hard work to get servants. I think it very likely, from my remembrance of those times. But she can't make much of a Hero out of her husband. He is and was an unmitigated fraud and bilk of the first water.

PIOCHE, *February 2d*, 1878

We are having a mild winter so far, just enough snow to cover the ground and the cattle are doing well. There is now every prospect of work being resumed in the R. and Ely and Meadow Valley mines this spring. They are now at work on both pumps. We believe firmly that they have only to pump out the water and sink deeper to find a bonanza equal to the Comstock. Three years ago they struck water at 1200 feet depth and since that they have gone no deeper. We expect a revival of the good times of /72, /73, and /74 again this summer and we who have stuck by and held our real estate through good and evil, expect to get our reward. The ways of these mining corporations are past finding out but it looks now as though they were going to work in earnest.

You people in the east need not fight against the remonetizing of silver and the dollar of our daddies because it is a fixed fact that it will be done. You are all deluded by the brokers and banks who make a percentage shaving silver and selling gold. Their occupation will be gone, I hope. We want a currency that a dollar is a dollar all over the country and just as soon as silver is coined and made legal tender it will be worth as much as gold. You will see that Jones is right and it is no particular advantage to him. I don't think he owns any paying mines.

What do you think of Blaine's controversy with

Mass.? Is the man crazy? What in the world is Maine and Mass. quarelling about?[1] There is a great deal said just now in the papers about HELL. It would be curious if the Universalist doctrine should be adopted by the Congregationalist Churches. I don't think all that is said and argued about it will alter the case. The matter was all settled a long time ago. All creeds and confessions of faith are the work of men's minds, just as binding as the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope and no more. You will see this plainly by reading the sermons of the different ministers and on this subject I have read lately at least twenty, and every one has a different idea of Hell and future punishment. Our Pastor has not spoken yet.

PIOCHE, *July 30th*, 1878

This town has completely gone in. Petered out. Everybody is leaving who can. As I am engaged in raising cattle and horses it doesn't make so much difference to me. The grass is splendid. I have planted a large piece of land and can live but I have had an offer from an old friend (Carson) to take my cattle up to the railroad in Wyoming or Colorado and he will put in 5000 acres worth of cattle with me and I may make a move or I might go to a new district in Arizona where some more friends have recently opened a number of rich

[1] Maine sent a statue of William King, first Governor of Maine, to the National Statuary Gallery, in 1878. Blaine, Senator from Maine, contrasted, in a speech at the presentation exercises, the active loyalty of the people of the District of Maine with the official and private aloofness of Massachusetts during the War of 1812, and emphasized the difficulties and opposition that Maine encountered from the Government and the leading men of the Commonwealth in obtaining consent to the setting-off of Maine from Massachusetts, to form a separate State, which occurred in 1820. The Massachusetts Senators called his remarks into account as uncalled-for, and in the election of 1884 the incident helped to carry Massachusetts against him, and was one of several factors contributing to his defeat and the election of Cleveland to the Presidency.

mines and would give me a show. I shall stay at the ranch till October anyhow but I am not entirely satisfied with this country. We have no market for beef without driving to the railroad and I don't feel like settling down for my life on my ranch without making another effort to make some money, enough to enable me to buy a good home.

PIOCHE, *February* 5, 1879

I see by the papers that Prof. Stewart has great success lecturing in Maine. He wrote back to some of his friends here that he could do nothing in New York or Boston but at Bangor he was appreciated. 'A prophet is not without honor,' etc. He tried lecturing here I heard him twice but it didn't go. He didn't tell us anything new and his theories won't find rich mines. The worst feature in his case is that he has been in the midst of the richest mines for 20 years and never found one yet and never made a cent. In fact he is ignorant of the very science he is trying to teach. He was here as one of a committee to collect specimens for the Centennial. Doct. Nichols had a very fine specimen of a formation found in limestone, something like stalactites and it resembles coral. He thought the Professor would be pleased with it and brought it to him but he did not think much of it and he gave it some highfalutin name that was all wrong and the Doct. felt a little miffed and concluded he would try and see if he did know anything so he got a piece of crystallized salt. That is common here. It comes from the Virgin River. I think Em has a piece with her.

He pricked it full of holes and filled the holes with gold dust . It looked very much like a rich specimen of white quartz. He found the Professor on the street, talking to a crowd, and gave it to him. 'Ah,' says he,

'that is a fine specimen, pure calcite, Gentlemen.' He examined it carefully and asked all about it: where it came from, etc. When he was going to put it away some one suggested that he touch his tongue to it to brighten it up. The Professor tasted it and waked up. He didn't talk much after that. He is a humbug, but there may be rich mines in Maine for all that, but I hardly think so. I don't think it is the right kind of a country for gold and silver. There may be other metals.

BODIE, *April 16th*, 1879

I left Pioche on the 22d of March and drove out here in my own wagon in 14 days, the whole width of the State of Nevada and five miles into California. It was a tedious trip. We crossed eleven ranges of mountains and of course eleven deserts between. Yet there is water every day's journey and a ranch with hay, except two nights. The weather was warm and we had no trouble at all. Good roads except they were sandy. We travelled for miles through sand like Cape Cod. The country after you get 50 miles west from Pioche is the abomination of desolation.

The first interesting place was a salt marsh about eight miles from Belleville. Here in the bottom of a large valley are thousands of acres of pure salt, white as the driven snow. They just drive on and shovel it into the wagon. As salt is used extensively in working ore it is worth 14 dollars a ton and is a fortune to the owner.

Bodie is in a range of mountains just east of the main Sierras and is principally gold quartz and has three very rich mines and lots of prospects. It is built on a level meadow about a mile long, compact, and is crowded with people. It is so near Virginia City that business is overdone I think and lots and rents are enormous.

But the mines are paying well, especially the Standard and Bulmer. They pay dividends.

Just after my arrival a rich strike was made in the Mammoth Mine at Lake District, 50 miles south. Some of the specimens were half gold. I hitched up the horses and started and got there in three days. This mine is on top of the Sierra Nevadas, 10,000 feet, and the snow is still three feet deep. It's a beautiful place. Grand peaks rise all around and there are seven lakes right above the town and lots of pine timber and water. Three miles below the valley is green with the new grass.

I know the Supt. of the mine and found out all about it. Already a large body of the richest kind of ore has been developed and if it holds out it will be the biggest mine in the country.

There is a small town of 15 or 20 houses, a large mill run by water power and every facility for mining cheap. I liked the place so much that I bought a lot and shall probably spend the summer there. There are a dozen other mines in the vicinity and I anticipate a grand rush to the new place. In two weeks there will be plenty of lumber cheap and I shall put up two buildings.

We rode back horseback. Left the wagon and took a shorter route. On our way back we rode along the shore of Mono Lake which is the largest body of water I have seen since I left the ocean. It is 25 miles long and 12 to 15 wide, with several large islands. It is beautiful scenery. It lies right under the Sierra Nevada Mountains with lots of fine streams running into it and it has no outlet. The water looks clear and blue but it is a good deal like concentrated lye to the taste. Contains borax and alkali and all sorts of mineral. No fish live in it. Stock cannot drink it. It is a curiousity for a lake. There were lots of ducks on it and they gather eggs from the islands by the boat load.

I like the country about here. It is the best mineral country that I know of. Rich mines all around and I shall spend the summer trying to get hold of one. It's the only way to make money. I have several chances to go in now. If you are lucky you make a fortune. If not you lose your time and I can go back to the cattle ranch. Arthur is going to run that. He is smart and capable and Jennie is a good business woman. So we are going to try it in two places.

She sent me Em's letter. I am glad she had a chance to see you and all the old places and she likes you and Alice very much. I hope she will be a credit to the family and feel grateful to you for your kindness to her. I feel she is happy and well cared for while she is down there so I don't have any cause to worry about my family while I am away. This is a great consolation. I think we are the happiest family in the world. What a blessing it is to a man to have a good wife and when I compare mine to the wives of most men I see here: women who are eternally getting their husbands into hot water, half of them had rather be a rich man's mistress than a poor man's wife; I feel perfectly easy.

BODIE, *April* 30, 1879

I received a letter from you which Jennie sent. Hereafter direct to Mammoth City, Mono County, Cal., as I go over there tomorrow to stay. I will locate the place for you on the map. Bodie is 118 miles south from Carson, the capital of Nevada. Mammoth City is 50 miles south of Bodie. Follow the Sierra Nevadas south from Carson. Bodie is 12 miles north of Mono Lake and Mammoth 25 miles south, on top of the Sierra Nevada Mountains 9000 feet altitude. Bodie is about 5 miles west of the State line in California. Aurora is 5 miles east in Nevada. To go over the summit from Bodie by

wagon road you come out at Sonora in California. From Mammoth you would go to Fresno, about 6 miles from Mammoth you get out and strike the head waters of the San Joaquin. A line of stages runs from here in the summer to Sonora but all the travel comes by the Central Pacific to Reno, thence by Truckee R.R. to Carson and stage to this place.

From Mammoth we can go to Mojave Station on the Southern Pacific R.R. by way of Owens Lake, 140 miles, and then to San Francisco by R.R. There is a steamboat on Owens Lake. It takes two days and cost 25 dollars to get to San Francisco. We are supplied with fresh fish, salmon etc., and strawberries and green peas, etc., from Sacramento and San Francisco now, at high prices, but we have everything to eat and drink here at reasonable prices for a new country. Splendid food at 50 cts a meal and 8 dollars a week.

I have been waiting for lumber to build. Shall put up a building 20×40 two stories. Have a half a dozen applications for it now. Can build it for about $800 and rent it for 150 dollars a month. My lot, 25×112 feet, cost 125 dollars. Could sell it now for $250. The mining experts and capitalists who have visited the lake district speak highly of the mines. Have bought several. Will open them out and put up mills and we expect a grand rush. It will be a lovely place in the summer but too much snow to do much in the winter. I expect to make money enough this summer to go away in the winter, if I am in luck. But I think it will last for several years.

Jennie and the rest are getting along nicely. How we are scattered but we will all get together I hope, one of these days. I had to strike out or just make a living at Pioche and we got tired of that kind of life. I feel like a new man here in the midst of all this excitement and as I have an extensive acquaintance here I think I shall

strike into something that will pay better than raising calves and making butter.

MAMMOTH CITY, *May 25th*, 1879

I am building a hotel, 21 × 40, two stories. Have it rented for 150 dollars per month. The man paid the rent when I commenced. You, living in one of those old built-up towns where it takes a year to build a house, know but little about a new mining town out here.

My house will be finished in ten days after I start in and I think it would astonish you to live with us awhile and see how we live. But there is an excitement about this, building up new towns, that I like better than plodding along at some steady business. I thought I would stay in Pioche and ranch and take life easy but as soon as the place gave out and no chance to make but a living I grew weary and sighed for new worlds to conquer. I lived a very quiet life for the last three years but I am back in the harness again, now, hard at work. The main street here is a jam of men and teams coming in from all parts and loaded with every conceivable article. We shall have a town as big as Bucksport by July. When I have time I will write more particulars.

I want to assure you that I appreciate all your kindness to me. You have always been the dearest sister in the world to me. Every thing you have done about settling the estate I am perfectly satisfied with. I feel sorry that your life is so unpleasant for I know the trials you are going through, but in your case there seems to be no escape. You must do your duty as a wife, come what may. It is too bad that this affliction has come over Joseph when you ought to be having the best time of life. You have all my sympathy and love. I hope to see you sometime and express my thanks for all you have done for me and Em Lou. I had a letter from her today and Jennie

and the family are all getting along nicely. I sha'n't probably see them till next winter.

MAMMOTH CITY, *June 29th*, 1879

I see you are getting interested in stocks. Beware! For it's a terrible fascinating game. The whole people of the State of Nevada and California almost are playing at this game.

Staid in Bodie two weeks finding out all I could about stocks and mines but didn't see any good buy in the opinion of all the experts and sharps. Bodie was assessed one dollar and no prospect of going up and I came out here and went to work at my house and of course spent my money, but if when you sent me the 600 I had bought Bodie for 9½ the price then, I could have sold for 47½ and cleared 3300 dollars. I could have doubled on Mono, Syndicate, Troya and three for one on Jupiter. I believe the Mammoth Mine here to be the best buy in the lot. This mine is not run to put the stock up but for some game it is kept back. They don't try to take out bullion and grand show but sack up all the rich ore and work the front ore and work the poorest. Mr. Grayson, the new President, is on his way here and I know him and will try and find out something, but this we all know: the ledge is immense and rich. They are running a tunnel at the base of the mountain and if they find the same ledge of gold ore as in the upper tunnel there is no telling the value of this mine. This will show a ledge 20 feet wide, 800 feet deep and of unknown length. The stock ought to be worth over 100 dollars a share. It is now selling for thirteen. You are too far off to deal in stocks.

Em writes of her visit to B. and was delighted with the grass and flowers and trees. She never saw anything but sage brush and stunted cedars and it was a new revelation to her. The weather is lovely here and everything green.

I went up to the Lake. It is about a half a mile above my house and is almost as large as your great pond. The scenery is magnificent. The mountains all around are covered with snow and rise up in all sorts of fantastic peaks like needles. This is the summit of the Sierras. A mile or two and you descend to the head waters of the San Joaquin river and on this side the water makes the Owens River.

Then I went down to the Hot Springs, five miles below town. At the spring the water boils. Will cook potatoes in 17 minutes. It is as large as six feet in diameter and boils up two feet below. There is a nice bath house where I bathed. Could just bear it. The water contains sulphur and iron and is quite a resort for people who want a clean wash.

Pioche, *May 23d*, 1880

I received a letter from you some time since. Have been waiting for certain events before writing. I told you of John Benson's proposition about the farm. It seems he is determined to have me settled. The next letter I got from him, he had bargained for the farm and wrote me a full description of it and his place.

He has, on the first place he bought, 80 acres of grapes, raised 350 tons. Also 20 head of Jersey cattle, chickens, ducks, turkeys etc; a barn 50 x 100 feet, and house. On the farm adjoining, which he has just bought (216 acres), there is a good house and out buildings, grain and hay crops. Last week he wrote that he completed the purchase and would take possession the 7th of June and told me I could come down with my household goods and gods and have it on any terms, so he could get a small rate of interest on his money, and also have the other place to run too, as his man that he has had there wants to go away.

Napa Valley, where this place is, is a paradise. Splendid climate and soil. Only 2½ hours from San Francisco. Grapes and wine are the principal crops but you can raise most everything. As I have made up my mind to leave this place as soon as I found another good mining camp, this offer came in good time. You may think that most people would jump at the chance but Jenny and I reflected and thought the matter over some time before we decided to go. We weighed the matter and looked on all sides. If I go there I abandon the idea of making a fortune or anything but a living. We have gotten so used to this life of excitement, speculating in stock, rich strikes. We expect everyday to find or get an interest in a rich mine. We are loose to go to Arizona, Sonora, Colorado or anywhere where we hear of a new town.

It will be a humdrum slow business to go to picking grapes and milking cows and raising chickens; but, on the other hand, we are getting along in life and we had better take a certainty on having a good living than the uncertainty of making money. If I were years younger I would take the mining camps.

The children are pleased with the prospect of having enough fruit to eat and John writes that there are good schools, cultivated society, the stated preaching of the Gospel and a large graveyard where lots don't cost anything. So we decided to go and settle for life. John really appears to want me and my family to live with him. That is, he is there part of the time but principally lives in San Francisco. He certainly must like me and wants me to be near him. I appreciate his kindness and will go and do all I can to repay him and try my best to make it profitable for him as well as myself.

PIOCHE, *June 20th*, 1880

Yesterday we had an auction and sold our house and

traps. You can imagine the accumulation of ten years about a house. We spent three days going through bureau drawers, etc. We packed three large boxes, 1000 lbs., to keep. We had a big crowd and things sold well. Tell Em that Charley Stion bought the house and a great deal of the furniture. A horse, the Jersey bull and our sewing machine I wouldn't sell for what I was offered and have them left yet to sell. We realized more than we expected, considering the dull times here.

MAMMOTH CITY, *July* 28, 1880

I have been detained here longer than I expected. Shall have to wait till August 6th, the monthly pay day of the Company, to collect some money and as I have plenty of spare time I thought I would give you some account of the country and the inhabitants thereof.

I had a pleasant trip from Pioche. It does not fatigue me any to ride 10 or 12 hours on horseback and I can go without water all day if necessary, although I carried a quart bottle wrapped in a wet cloth and it keeps cool all day in the hottest weather.

I passed over a new route and saved some 30 miles. I rode straight west from Pioche to Belmont, not following the road but had a better route through more mountains and less deserts. At Belmont I met our worthy Bishop Whittaker on his annual rounds.

I only rode seven miles on the 4th of July and stopped in Candelaris. This place has grown very much since last summer. Has several rich mines and 500 miners at work. It is built up on the mountains at the mines (the Northern Belle is the most famous) and has no water or wood for miles. Water is 5 cts. a gallon. Wood $25 a cord. I found lots of acquaintances and the town full of men, celebrating by getting drunk. I was not at all surprised in the afternoon to hear 8 or 10 pistol shots fired in rapid suc-

cession on the street. We all rushed out. One was man lying dead, shot through the head. The other shot in the right side, not hurt much. A young girl, a prostitute, was making a great fuss over the latter and carried him to her house. This showed his status in society. Everybody said they were two worthless miserables and it was a pity both were not killed. The affair was all forgotten in half an hour and the celebration went on all right.

The next day to Benton, where the springs are all hot water. Then I began to come into the foot hills of the Sierra Nevadas. The view of the mountains from here is grand. The whole range rises before you like a wall 10,000 feet high, with several peaks of 14,000 feet, covered with snow. I had left the deserts of Nevada and was riding all day over green meadows and crossing streams of cold ice water every few rods. My horse and myself drank at every stream. Only two days before we travelled from San Antonio, 40 miles without a drop of water or grass.

I got in town about nine o'clock and slept in my own house. I found about the same people I left. The mill and mine are running and although the place is very dull and everybody flat broke and in debt, I think the outlook is better than it was last fall. They have been shut up for four months with snow and the mill only commenced work the 1st of July.

I went round town talking for two days and listened to all the stories of how deep the snow was, the storms and how this man who we all thought was such a good fellow had turned out to be a grand scoundrel and Mrs. So and So lived with a man all winter without any marriage ceremony, house all buried in snow (I don't blame her) and all about Mrs. Bunker having a miscarriage and the Lord only knows what I did hear. It seems they were very much like a lot of passengers on board a vessel who get to hate each other after being shut up together for some time.

The snow fell about 10 feet deep and one storm lasted twenty-three days. They had no mail or communication without going out on snow shoes for four months. They had lots of fun on these snow shoes. It was the only way of getting around. They are made of a pine plank, 11 feet long and 4 inches wide, turned up at the end like a skate. You scuff along going up hill and going down. You slide, with a long pole to steady you. Men and women get to be very expert on them but now the weather is delicious. We frequently have to have a little fire in the evening and can wear thick clothes.

Last week I went fishing over the summit on the South Fork of the San Joaquin, about 12 miles, Forbes, Major R. and an Indian, Jim. We go down the mountain to the stream, a mile nearly perpendicular but when you get there the valley is from 100 yds. to a half a mile wide. Sometimes a green meadow and sometimes covered with magnificent pines and firs, 6 feet through. We found regular down East brakes, strawberries, alder swamps, rattle snakes, deer, quail and plenty of trout. We camped right by a soda spring, just like soda out of a fountain exactly, but we had no syrup to go with it.

The scenery is equal to Yosemite. About two miles below our camp we found a Chinaman with 2000 sheep. The night before a California lion got amongst them and killed eight. We found a fat lamb not dead and had lamb chops added to our bill of fare. We had a fine time and stayed four days. Then we looked up to the top of that mountain and wondered if we could ever get there. You had to throw your head way back to see it, but we packed my horse and started and were just two hours getting to the top. There are only two places where you can get into this valley. During the winter they built several nice sail boats on Lake Mary and as it is one mile and a half in diameter, nearly round, we can have quite a sail.

I can't sell my house for much and shall keep it for better times which I think will come here by and by.

OAKVILLE, *August 29th*, 1880

To go back to Mammoth and follow my track: I left August 10th with five men and crossed the mountains. Was three days to the first house: Frezno Flat, 55 miles. Walked most of the way. Then by Stage to the railroad to Madera, then to San Francisco, 188 miles in eight hours. I had not been in the city since 1869. I was in search of a wife and two children. I found them at Mrs. G.'s without any trouble.

The city has, of course, grown very much. Where they were living was all waste land when I left. The next three days we strolled and rode round. I still think it is the finest city to live in in the U.S. The street cars running by a wire cable underground, out of sight, are a curiosity and way ahead of horse cars. You get on top of the hill on any of the streets leading down to the bay and the sensation is like sliding down hill. We were very much interested in the fine residences. On Nob Hill they are all built of wood and carved and covered with gingerbread work, with towers, cupolas, domes. I had never in my imagination conceived of such houses as Stanford, Crocker and lots more, have built. They look like castles that we read about and such gardens and brilliant flowers and immense glass conservatories.

Here is where all the silver that we have had sent from Nevada has stopped and been spent and we began to think that we had been trying to get a few crumbs from the rich man's table. It was a kind of melancholy satisfaction for Jennie and me to stroll around and gaze upon these splendors and try and guess which house our twenty dollar pieces went into: the assessments on Gould and Curry and Hale and Norcross and the time we got

cinched on Crown Point, etc., for here is where it all gets to. These magnates own the mines, the State of Nevada and all the people in it.

Our German friends treated us splendidly. They live in an elegant house. We took them out for a drive to the Park and Cliff House where Mamie and Rufus saw the ocean for the first time and we went to the theatre and took in the Vienna Garden and the Tivoli. This entertainment pleased me best: Opera Bouffe, where you can drink beer and smoke and the music is splendid. The best class of people go, too.

One day we called at the Palace Hotel on Senator Jones. We found him as we were walking in the corridor and had no difficulty in recognizing each other, though fourteen years have passed since we met. He is the same old boy, with a merry twinkle in his eye, a good deal stouter and I am sorry to say he has lost all his money. He says at one time his income was 100,000 dollars a month. I also met Billy Raymond, over seventy years old, but smart and active as ever. When he was in Pioche in /73 his income was 56,000 a month from the Raymond & Ely mine, for over a year and his stock worth a million. Now he has no more money than I have, and his family boarding. Now look at these men and don't be surprised that I am not rich. I never had enough money to put any away. I never got a good starter.

We visited the Stock Exchange and saw the true inwardness of buying and selling stocks. Our broker gave us tickets and the polite usher seated us in the gallery of a magnificent hall where we looked down on the Bull Ring and watched the encounter of the Bulls and Bears: a perfect Bedlam. We couldn't understand a word and had to go back to the office to see what stocks were selling at.

I met lots of old friends and enjoyed every moment of my stay and feasted on raspberries, blackberries and fish

and oysters. I could have put in a month and if I had money there is where I would live. If you should ever visit San Francisco you never would want to leave it. No hot weather and not cold enough for a fire, with every luxury of the market.

We came up here in the cars, crossing the bay to Oakland and crossing again at Vallejo in three and a half hours, fare $2.25. At last we are in a highly civilized country. The cars run by the house, half a dozen times a day. The school house is close by. The whole country is thickly settled, fine houses and fine farms, cultivated, way up.

Napa City, 12 miles below, is nearly as large as Bangor and St. Helena, nine miles above, about as large as Bucksport. John has 511 acres of land, 120 acres in vineyard will raise this year about 400 tons of grapes. He makes fine raisins. Has a drying house, wine cellar, immense barn — a little town around — employs ten men, has a comfortable house and is building a new house for me. Two China cooks. He has a fine library which will be a treat to Em Lou. All the surroundings are lovely. It is the Garden of California.

When he was in Europe he got seeds and plants and vines of all varieties and he is planting them in a nursery. He will soon have 100,000 plants in pots and boxes, such as cork trees, carob trees, etc. It will be quite a curiosity by and by. His own mansion is not built yet, but the site is selected. He has a very elegant house in San Francisco where he lives, with servants and it is furnished with every luxury. This he is trying to sell. I don't know how rich he is. He told me he had spent 80,000 on the ranch already, so you can imagine what kind of a farm it must be. Tell Em Lou she shall have an elegant room with a view from the windows of a landscape that can't be beat: clear across the valley. The whole house is shaded by

four magnificent oaks and there is quite a flower garden, an Oleander higher than my head, two almond trees and grape arbors till you can't rest.

OAKVILLE, *September 19th*, 1880

Our new house is almost ready for painting. It will be a finer house than we ever lived in before and Jennie will be happy when she takes possession. We shall then be ready for that visit from you. I am engaged in running a tunnel into the hill to see if I can increase the water as the supply is rather small for both places.

Grape picking will begin next month. John will have about 400 tons. He has sold the crop for 22½ dollars per ton. He has also had the grain threshed, 1200 sacks or 80 tons, of wheat and barley, so he will have something to sell this year. There will be an immense grape crop here this year and every year the price advances. I think they will be worth 30 and 40 dollars next year. It depends a good deal on the variety of grapes. John's are principally muscat and not the best for wine. The zinfandel brings thirty dollars this season.

I don't plan to make but a living here for the first year. I have not made any arrangement yet with John but I am studying the farm and getting all the information I can about the business. Next year he plans to build a distillery and he already has a wine cellar and make up his own crop. He reserved enough grapes to make 1200 gallons of wine and I want to experiment a little and see what I can do in making wine. I wish I could send you the dish of grapes that is on our dinner table today.

OAKVILLE, *Thanksgiving Day*, 1880

We have no society but our own family here, not being much acquainted with our neighbors as yet. I rather

like this but Em and Arthur think it is rather dull. I like the idea of living like the English Aristocracy in the midst of your estate with no near neighbors to bother you with their chickens and things. Most of the places here are owned by rich people who live for the most part in San Francisco and have their friends visit them. We can have plenty of company whenever we invite them. Arthur likes the place very much. He has bought a lot of chickens and turkeys and is going into the business quite extensively. We have the finest place to raise them, plenty of room and it costs nothing to feed them and a good market in San Francisco where eggs are always worth from 30 to 50 cts a dozen. People come to the house and buy all the extra butter I can make at 37½¢ per pound. Everything will sell here for cash.

I saw in the paper an account of a fire in Mammoth which I think took in my house. Have not got the particulars yet but I think it is gone. Such is life. All send love.

OAKVILLE, *January 22d*, 1881

We are living a very quiet life, no excitement, and we see very few people outside of our own family. We have enough to do taking care of the Jersey cattle. Arthur is breaking a horse, pruning the vineyard, raising chickens, turkeys and ducks, bringing up four calves by hand (no bottle), making butter, etc. In the evening we read the San Francisco papers and play whist and casino. I have never been out an evening but Em and Arthur have made some acquaintances with two of our neighbors and visit them and have evening parties and rides. Ten years ago I should have found this rather dull but now my curiosity is satisfied and I like it.

I have given up the idea of ever finding a rich mine or making a fortune in stocks. I have given it a fair trial

and such things are not for me so I am setting out trees and fixing myself comfortably for life right here and I don't know where you can find such a beautiful climate and valley. It always seemed strange to me when a person can fix his residence where he likes that he should live and struggle with cold winters, snow storms, sleet and ice when you can do just as well where you have none of these things. Now, if you were here today, walking around with John Benson and me you would see a cloudless sky, warm as May with you, the hills and valley all green. The wheat is about two inches high; the almond trees just ready to burst into bloom. Roses and lilacs are leafing out. It was just cold enough at night to form ice for a few nights but we never see any snow. It looks cheerful evening to have a fire but we don't need it. I never wear a coat. Now don't you think this a place made for living and taking comfort in?

I see in your letter of the 20th, you wish to know how far we are from San Francisco. We are 55 miles. We take the cars at the station Oakville about one half mile from our house and go in three hours. Fare $2.25. Oakville is not a village: only a store, Depot, blacksmith shop and few houses. Our house is about a quarter of a mile from John's house and farm buildings, we live on the place adjoining his that he bought. He took down the old house and built the new one at the same site and we have all the old farm buildings, two large barns, granary, carriage house, dairy house, etc. So John has two establishments. The old place where his workmen live: a Danish family and four hired men and Chink cook, and his own rooms are on one side of the place and our place the other side. He has 500 acres of land nearly square, in the valley running back to the hills, and 300 acres of the hills.

I asked John what he wanted me to do on the ranch. He said do just what you like. I am running a tunnel to

increase the supply of water and shall set out about 3,000 grape vines. I also take charge of the Jerseys, the finest breed of cows you ever saw. In fact, I don't think you ever saw one. John bought two imported cows for 900 dollars and now has 14 cows and 11 head of young cattle. Pure blood they are. Small, mouse colored with a tan colored nose. I am milking four and get about 16 quarts of milk at one milking but it is almost cream. I make 20 lbs of butter a week and John suggested making cheese and will send me the apparatus when he goes to the city. I am adept at making butter. It is gilt edged, yellow as gold. You know I studied that up in Nevada.

Sunday nights imagine us singing Gospel Hymns. Although out of the deserts, in the midst of civilization, we are two miles from Church. Good night.

THE END

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